

# PCSpecialist Vortex FE

A well-made and powerful system that's ready for any task – and can be delivered to you tomorrow

SCORE

PRICE **£3,749 (£4,499 inc VAT)** from [tinyurl.com/383vortex](https://tinyurl.com/383vortex)

**A**rrow Lake? That's history. When it comes to high-end desktop chips, Intel only wants to talk about Arrow Lake Refresh, which currently consists of the Core Ultra 5 250K Plus and Core Ultra 7 270K Plus (see issue 381, p56). British PC manufacturer PCSpecialist puts the latter in the heart of the Vortex FE, and that makes absolute sense: it's around £200 cheaper than the Core Ultra 9 285K (an older Arrow Lake chip) yet often outperforms it in games and benchmarks.

While AMD's expensive X3D chips will perform faster in most games thanks to their additional cache, the Core Ultra 7 270K Plus is actually a better all-rounder. That shows in this PC's strong showings in Geekbench 6, as revealed in the graphs below, while a multicore result of 2,470 in Cinebench 2024 hammers home the strength that comes from having 24 cores at your disposal. It helps that PCSpecialist provides 64GB of RAM, filling all four DIMM sockets on the Asus TUF Gaming motherboard. It's RGB memory, of course, adding a splash of colour right in the centre of the machine.

That 64GB of RAM costs around £700, but this is still as nothing compared to the £1,799 that Nvidia charges for the Founders Edition version of the GeForce RTX 5090, as provided here. I'll cut to the chase and provide this PC's frame rates at 4K with all settings at or near their



peak: 122fps in *Cyberpunk 2077* (RT Ultra), 272fps in *Shadow of the Tomb Raider* (Highest), 236fps in *Borderlands 3* (Badass) and 127fps in *Far Cry 6* (Ultra High). Give or take a few fps, that's exactly what we've seen from other RTX 5090 systems.

PCSpecialist again goes to town with the storage, opting for a 2TB Samsung 9100 Pro PCIe Gen5 drive.

I noticed its speed when copying large folders of files, so I wasn't surprised to see it return over 12,000MB/sec sequential reads and over 13,000MB/sec writes in CrystalDiskMark 9. There's room for more

M.2 storage on the high-quality Asus TUF Gaming Z890-Plus WiFi motherboard, with three empty slots, albeit PCIe Gen4 rather than Gen5. There's also space for one

3.5in drive and two 2.5in SSDs in a storage area hidden by the grey plastic housing on the right-hand side of the chassis, but due to the graphics card support it isn't easy to access this. A 1,000W Corsair PSU sits hidden out of sight, along with all the neatly tied cables.

Quite aside from aesthetics, one reason for the minimal cabling on view in the main area is to keep the air flowing. The CPU is kept cool by a liquid cooler. It's only when the system gets into full flow that they become noisy, which is no wonder as the peak power consumption of this PC is 880W.

Technically there are three available PCIe expansion slots: working from the bottom, one PCIe 4.0 x16, one PCIe 4.0 x4 and one PCIe 4.0 x1 slot. Another x1 slot is covered by the graphics card, and in reality I suspect the second one will be too: it would be extremely close to one of the graphics card's fans. Still, two expansion slots are all you're likely to need, with the motherboard offering Wi-Fi 7, Thunderbolt 4 and 2.5GbE. There's also a USB-C 3.2 Gen2x2 (20Gbits/sec) port on the front left of the chassis, alongside two USB-A ports and a 3.5mm combo jack. The power button sits at the top.

As always, PCSpecialist provides a three-year warranty with this PC. And you should expect strong support during that time, with the company always performing extremely well in our reader-voted Excellence Awards for customer support and reliability (vote in this year's survey at [tinyurl.com/pcproawards26](https://tinyurl.com/pcproawards26)). This particular PC should arrive with you quickly, too, as it's part of the company's Next Day delivery range. Of course, it's expensive, but with this much power you're buying a system that will provide exceptional speeds for many years. **TIM DANTON**

### SPECIFICATIONS

24-core (8 P-cores/16 E-cores) Intel Core Ultra 7 270K Plus processor • Asus TUF Gaming Z890-Plus WiFi motherboard • 64GB Corsair Vengeance RGB DDR5-6000 RAM • 32GB Nvidia GeForce RTX 5090 Founders Edition graphics • PCSpecialist LS-360 AIO liquid cooler • 2TB Samsung 9100 Pro M.2 PCIe Gen5 SSD • Phanteks Evolv S2 Black chassis • 1,000W Corsair RMx PSU • Windows 11 Home • 230 x 455 x 525mm (WDH) • 3yr warranty (6 month C&R, 1yr RTB parts & labour, 2yr labour only) • power: 79W idle, 880W peak

**ABOVE** The Vortex FE is a powerful PC that will be good for years to come



**LEFT** The inside of the chassis is as tidy as the outside is classy

**BELOW** Three aRGB fans push air upwards from the base

