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Fujitsu LifeBook T3000 Tablet PC review: Fujitsu LifeBook T3000 Tablet PC

Fujitsu LifeBook T3 Tablet PC

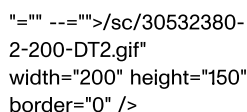
Dan Littman

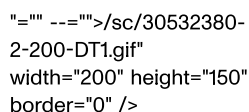
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6 min read

Review summary

For Fujitsu, the company behind some top-selling tablets, the writing was apparently on the slate. That design may be fine for niche markets, but it takes a notebooklike convertible to lure a broader audience. Enter the LifeBook T3000 series, Fujitsu's first convertible that runs Windows XP Tablet PC Edition. Though it's a touch on the heavy side for an ultraportable with no internal optical drives, this \$2,049 Centrino-based convertible delivers surprisingly good performance and nearly four hours of battery life. The LifeBook T3000 uses the same center-hinge design found on other convertibles from Acer and Toshiba; to switch between notebook and tablet modes, you just swivel the screen 180 degrees and fold it back over the keyboard. When folded up, the T3000 measures 11.5 by 9.3 by 1.5 inches and weighs slightly more than four pounds--similar in size and weight to the Toshiba Portégé 3505 but bulkier than the Acer TravelMate C110, not to mention most standard ultraportables.





The T3000 uses a central hinge for swiveling and folding the screen.

The keyboard is slightly saggy.

The center hinge is stiff, especially on a new unit, and the lid is hard to hook with the same thumb that opens the clasp. As a result, we accidentally let the T3000 slip and bang on the desk a couple of times until we got used to opening it with both hands. When you swivel the screen, the T3000 changes automatically from Landscape mode to Portrait, but if you prefer Landscape in tablet mode, a Fujitsu utility lets you set that as the default.

The 12.1-inch display is somewhat smaller than the lid can accommodate, because tablets require a wide bezel for buttons, status lights, and a slot that holds the stylus. The default resolution is just 1,024×768 pixels (XGA), but the screen is surprisingly bright (touch screens tend to be dark because they have extra electronics between the light source and your eyes), and it displays crisp, clean text. The bezel buttons switch quickly and easily between Landscape and Portrait modes, but an adjacent button that purportedly opens the task manager (the equivalent of pressing Ctrl-Alt-Delete) barely works.

The T3000 has a slightly saggy but quiet and responsive keyboard and a standard-issue touchpad with left and right mouse buttons separated by a scroll button. A tiny mono speaker just above the keyboard is barely audible even at maximum volume; the display covers it in tablet mode, but you won't really notice. Instead of the standard sliding latches, the battery is secured using tight clips that are difficult to pry off. The LifeBook T3000 series comes in two basic versions. The T3000 models are full-fledged Centrino systems with both 1.4GHz Pentium M processors and up and Intel Pro/Wireless 2100 802.11b network adapters. The T3000D models use the same Pentium M chips but with an 802.11g adapter from Broadcom. Both the T3000 and T3000D use the same 12.1-inch XGA display and are somewhat customizable, with recommended configurations ranging from \$1,800 to more than \$2,000.

The T3000 that we tested included a 1.4GHz Pentium M processor, 512MB of memory, a 60GB hard drive, and an integrated Intel graphics controller. The low-power processor helps prolong the working life of the smallish battery--the 3600mAh battery weighs only 0.6 pounds and costs \$98, so carrying an extra is no burden if you plan to be away from AC for longer than four hours.

The T3000 has no internal drives, but you can select from a line of external USB drives, including CD-ROM (\$150), combination DVD/CD-RW (\$349), and floppy (\$30). Aside from the dual Type II/single Type III PC Card slots typically not found on ultraportables, all of the connectors are standard fare, and they include two USB 2.0 ports, Ethernet and modem, and VGA ports. A button on the back edge controls power to the Centrino-standard Wi-Fi "b" wireless network transmitter. With its 1.4GHz Pentium M, the Fujitsu LifeBook T3000 has the fastest processor of any tablet PC that we've yet tested. And it's the fastest tablet we've tested. The Acer TravelMate C110 Tablet is a distant second but still offers up good mobile performance, especially for a 900MHz Pentium M-based system. The HP Compaq Tablet PC TC1100 is even lower on the mobile-performance pole, scoring nearly 30 points lower than the LifeBook T3000. This system should have no problems running your office and content-creation apps in an unplugged state.

Mobile application performance (Longer bars indicate faster performance)

BAPCo MobileMark2002 performance rating

Fujitsu LifeBook T3000 Tablet	152
Acer TravelMate C110 Tablet	133
HP Compaq Tablet PC TC1100	124

To measure mobile application performance and battery life, CNET Labs uses BAPCo's MobileMark2002. MobileMark measures both application performance and battery life concurrently using a number of popular applications (Microsoft Word 2002, Microsoft Excel 2002, Microsoft PowerPoint 2002, Microsoft Outlook 2002, Netscape Communicator 6.0, WinZip Computing WinZip 8.0, McAfee VirusScan 5.13, Adobe Photoshop 6.0.1, and Macromedia Flash 5.0).

Performance analysis written by CNET Labs assistant lab manager Eric Franklin.

System configurations:

Acer TravelMate C110 Tablet

Windows XP Tablet; 900MHz Intel Pentium M; 512MB DDR SDRAM 266MHz; Intel 82852/92855 GM/GME Graphics Controller (up to 64MB shared); IBM Travelstar 40GB 40GN 4,200rpm

Fujitsu LifeBook T3000 Tablet

Windows XP Tablet; 1.4GHz Intel Pentium M; 512MB DDR SDRAM 266MHz; Intel 82852/82855 GM/GME Graphics Controller (up to 64MB shared); Toshiba MK6021GAS 60GB 4,200rpm

HP Compaq Tablet PC TC1100

Windows XP Tablet; 1GHz Intel Pentium M; 512MB DDR SDRAM 266MHz; Nvidia GeForce4 420 Go 32MB; Fujitsu MHT2040AT 40GB 4,200rpm The LifeBook T3000 posted great battery life, thanks to its 10.8V, 3,600mAh (39WHr) battery. Although the HP Compaq Tablet PC TC1100, with its 11.1V, 3,600mAh (40WHr) battery lasted 11 minutes longer, the LifeBook T3000's battery life is more impressive, as this notebook has a much faster processor that sucks more juice from its battery. Also, Fujitsu did not have to sacrifice mobile performance to get the LifeBook T3000 to last more than three and a half hours. The Acer TravelMate C110 Tablet could not compete because of its low-power, 14.8V, 1,800mAh (27WHr) battery. Battery life is not a problem here. The Fujitsu LifeBook T3000 was able to last a good while, at the same time keeping its performance high while running office and content-creation apps.

Battery life (Longer bars indicate longer battery life)

BAPCo MobileMark2002 battery-life minutes

HP Compaq Tablet PC TC1100	232
Fujitsu LifeBook T3000 Tablet	221
Acer TravelMate C110 Tablet	137

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Windows XP Tablet; 1GHz Intel Pentium M; 512MB DDR SDRAM 266MHz; Nvidia GeForce4 420 Go 32MB; Fujitsu MHT2040AT 40GB 4,200rpm Service and reliability are always primary concerns with business notebooks, and that is especially true of convertible tablets with swiveling hinges. Given that, Fujitsu's policies are hardly reassuring. The company provides only one year of depot repair and one year of toll-free, 24/7 tech support. Extending the warranty to three years costs an extra \$150; special Screen Damage Protection, for those times you poke the stylus through the LCD, costs \$150 for one year or \$383 for three years. Onsite service is another extracost option.

Fujitsu includes a getting-started poster that introduces neophytes to the notebook/tablet transition and a card that covers remapping everything for left-handers, calibrating the pen's digitizing function, using the onscreen keyboard in XP Tablet PC Edition, and learning the basics of using a computer without a keyboard or a mouse. A longer manual provides more general information, such as how to install extra memory, along with tips on battery management and troubleshooting.

To find out more about how this product's warranty really stacks up and what you should look for in terms of service and support, take a look at CNET's hardware warranty explainer.



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Fujitsu LifeBook T3000 Tablet PC

SCORE BREAKDOWN

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