



Away You Go

EPSON EMP-DM1 PROJECTOR \$1199

One thing I've become acutely aware of since I began my *Tone* tour of duty is how passionate our reviewers are about quality. Luckily, while our experts appreciate the joys of high-end equipment, they're also capable of great pragmatism. Gary Pearce, for instance, spends great wads of hard-earned cash on esoteric stereo equipment, but I know that he also enjoys his iPod when the occasion demands.

Pearce is also a great fan of high-end home cinema projectors, but I doubt that he would gravitate towards this particular Epson, which is billed as a 'Home Entertainment Projector'. Horses for courses, and all that. While I like a good, clear picture as much as the next guy, my pictorial aesthetic simply isn't as demanding as those who require near-perfect image projections. That's a good thing, because the EMP-DM1 casts a rather average picture. But we'll come back to that later.

So given its most glaring deficiency, why do I love this unit so much? Easy. The EMP-DM1 is a projector as portable entertainment hub, and it's literally plug and play.

If, like me, you're renting, or not in a position to get a permanent projector install, this wee baby is a great solution to those times you just want a big, eff-off image. You grab it, plug it in, plonk it on a chair or a coffee table, point it at a wall, slap a DVD in (yes, it's got an in-built DVD drive) and away you go.

There are loads of things you can do with this Epson, and just as many potential uses for it. I can see it being whipped out at flat parties or taken away to the holiday home; I had visions of playing old super-8 home movies that have been converted to DVD at a family function. That kind of lark.

Game consoles can be plugged in and the USB point

means it can be used for slide shows – just one of many applications.

I found it brilliant. I was in business watching some terrible Disney animation within a couple of minutes, and the picture frame distortion that resulted from shining the screen from an odd angle was easily rectified by clever settings buttons. The crowning touch was the fully functional, user-friendly remote. There's even a 'cup of tea' Pause function that gives the unit a wee rest while you deal with interruptions.

Did someone ask about picture quality? Well, the price you pay (metaphorically speaking) for such a convenient, resilient and inexpensive unit is a visible screen door effect, where the lines separating the pixels are visible. Having said that, however, there are some cinemas in Auckland with worse quality image projections, and apart from the lines, the depth of colour and clarity was surprisingly good.

Obviously, the sound coming out of a tiny projector is going to be average, but the EMP-DM1 can easily be plugged into your stereo system for sound enhancement, should the need arise.

No, it's not high end, but neither is the price. This wee Epson is a rugged charmer, and is absolutely perfect for the kind of situations described above. ■ GARY STEEL



DETAILS



CONTACT

www.epson.co.nz

SPECIFICATIONS

LENS: Digital zoom and manual focus, slide lens shutter (manual)

LAMP: 120W UHE ETOR

BRIGHTNESS: 1000 ANSI lumens (dynamic)

SOUND OUTPUT: 8w x 2 / 8ohm

COLOUR: 16.77 million colours

CONNECTIONS: Video - RCA x 1, Component x 1 Audio - RCA x 1, 3.5mm headphone stereo jack USB, D-sub

DIMENSIONS: 320 x 230 x 135mm (W/D/H)

WEIGHT: Approx. 3.8kg

PROS

- ✦ Plug in and play
- ✦ Includes DVD player
- ✦ Great price

CONS

- ✗ Not a high-end image

VERDICT

The perfect projector to bung in the boot and take on holiday, this wee Epson is cheap, cheerful and convenient

Aesthetics	79%
Performance	84%
Features	89%
Functionality	90%
Price Value	96%
Overall	

