Promoted as an ‘all-in-one digital photo lab’, Epson’s Stylus Photo RX510 is worth a close look if you’re reasonably new to digital photography and haven’t yet bought a printer or scanner. This device combines both functions, but offers higher output quality levels than competing devices for the same cost. The printer is a six-colour model that uses a new type of dye-based ink in cartridges that are individually replaceable.

The RX510 also sports the latest direct printing facilities and is DPOF and Direct Print compatible. Five card slots are provided for direct insertion of Memory Stick, Memory Stick PRO, MultiMedia Card, SD Memory Card, xD-Picture Card, Smart Media, Compact Flash, and IBM Microdrive media. A cover is provided for the card slots to protect them from dust (which can corrupt card memories).

Prints can be output with narrow white borders or printed edge-to-edge and facilities are provided for printing thumbnail sheets of all images on a memory card without a computer. You can also print directly from – or scan into – most software applications.

The scanner isn’t limited to print and scan functions, as Epson Scan includes a transparency unit for scanning – and you had to look closely to detect them. The RX510’s copy button. An A4 photo print took roughly four and a half minutes to produce. Scanning speed depends on the resolution setting and size of the original. Using the Epson Scan interface, we scanned a 35mm negative at 12,800 dpi (the highest setting) in one minute and 40 seconds, which is pretty fast. This produced a 1632 x 8853 pixel image, which was saved as a 25.3MB JPEG file. This file could be printed out at 75 x 47.7 cm when re-sized to 300 dpi.

On test, the RX510’s overall picture quality proved to be surprisingly good. The images we produced were a close match to the original, although we detected a slight increase in contrast and a marginal red/magenta shift in both the colour and B&W photos we scanned. The reproduced images were also just a touch softer. But the differences were only noticeable when the copies and originals were viewed side-by-side – and you had to look closely to detect them.

Initial consumables costs for the RX510 are fairly hefty, with each ink cartridge priced at $20.90 ($125.40 for the lot!) and photo paper ranging from $36.30 for 20 A4 sheets of ColorLife Photo Paper down to $20.90 for the same size and quantity of the lighter-weight Photo Paper. We calculated the cost for an A4 photo at $1.81 for the most expensive paper plus between $2.50 and $3.30 for ink. (In our tests, the first ink cartridge ran out after 38 borderless A4 photo prints.)

Using the RX510 as a direct printer is straightforward, once you’ve figured out how the buttons integrate with each other. Driving it from a computer is even easier. The software bundle includes Epson’s PhotoQuicker 3.5, Epson Scan, Epson Copy and Epson’s Print Image Framer and Print Image Framer Designer applications. These are generally easy to use, even in the Advanced modes.

The RX510 is an impressive all-rounder and its price/performance ratio makes it a stand-out product for home offices, family snappers and anybody with a heap of prints and films that they want to digitise. Recommended.

## SPECIFICATIONS

- **MAXIMUM RESOLUTION:** printing - 5760 x 1440 ‘Optimised’ dpi; scanning - 2400 x 4800dpi.
- **INTERFACE:** USB 2.0 (Windows and Macintosh) 480 Mbps
- **PAPER SIZES:** A4, A5, up to 216 x 356mm, 89 x 127mm, 127 x 178mm, 203 x 254mm.
- **INK CARTRIDGES:** T0491 (black), T0492, T0493, T0494, T0495, T0496 (colour).
- **CARD SLOTS:** CF, SM, MS (Memory Stick Pro compatible), SD/MMC, xD-Picture Card.
- **POWER CONSUMPTION:** 1w (operational)
- **SPECIAL FEATURES:** direct print slots for CF (Type I and II), Microdrive, MS, SD/MMC and SM cards.
- **DIMENSIONS (WXHDX):** 456 x 256 x 439mm
- **WEIGHT:** 9.8Kg
- **RRP:** $599

**DISTRIBUTOR:**