



i GEFORCE GT
650M GPU
1,600 X 900
MATTE SCREEN
MEETS
ULTRABOOK SPECS



Gigabyte U2442

Genuinely portable gaming in a beefed-up ultrabook.

@ www.gigabyte.com.au

✓ Portable, great performance, good battery life.

✗ Poor speakers, spongy keyboard.

As a vendor of primarily enthusiast PC-building hardware, our expectations of Gigabyte's gaming laptop were of something chunky and powerful, like the big, brash desktop replacements supplied by Taiwanese compatriots MSI and ASUS.

Suffice to say that this over-spec'd ultrabook came as a surprise, then. Weighing just 1.7kg and slipping into a slightly fatter than usual ultrabook chassis, the U2442 starts with the usual ultrabook stats – a low wattage 1.9GHz Core i7 CPU, 14in screen and 128GB SSD – but it ramps up the game-friendly specs. That means more memory (8GB of DDR3 RAM and a secondary 750GB platter drive for game storage) plus something we haven't seen before in this style of laptop: a serious GPU.

Nvidia's mid-range GT 650M would be underpowered in a bigger machine, and that's reflected in a relatively low 3DMark 11 score, but combined with the U2442's 1,600 x 900 screen and svelte form factor, it's a revelation. We sampled a few levels of *Crysis 2* on high-detail settings at the U2442's native resolution and found it entirely smooth. (Our real world benchmarking apps didn't want to run on the U2442, even after a full Windows reset, but our subjective opinion is that *Crysis 2* was easily clearing 30fps). For a portable machine, that's impressive.

Battery life, too, was more in line with thin and light machines than typical gaming models; the U2442's 112-minute Powermark result was very good indeed, especially considering the limited battery space.

Given the affordable price, the U2442 is not without compromises. The twisted nematic screen isn't the most vibrant we've viewed, while the chiclet keyboard is a soft, spongy affair that's not ideal for typing or gaming. The tiny speakers won't blow anyone away either. But we're obviously nitpicking now. This is a great effort from Gigabyte and a seriously practical option for gaming on the go.