

## GIGABYTE U2142



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### VERDICT

**Poor performance and a grainy display make the U2142 an Ultrabook to avoid**

**WE'VE LIKED GIGABYTE'S** recent laptops, so we had high hopes for its Ultrabook tablet convertible, the U2142. This model has a central pivot hinge that rotates the screen and allows it to fold back against the keyboard. Despite this mechanism, the laptop weighs just 1.4kg and is only 20mm thick.

It's easy to turn into a tablet, but we ran into problems with the screen's auto-rotation. At times it worked perfectly, but at others it refused to rotate, leaving us with the display in the wrong orientation. There's a button to lock the screen in place, but this is of little consolation when you can't get it into the orientation you want in the first place. We're not keen on the way the pivot bulges out of the side either, but at least it makes the device slightly easier to hold in tablet mode.

Unfortunately, there are other problems with the U2142. The most disappointing is its raw processing power. Our review sample came with a 1.8GHz Intel Core i5-3337U processor that can Turbo Boost up to 2.7GHz when temperatures allow, and 4GB of RAM, but it scored just 35 overall in our multimedia benchmarks. That's 10 points behind other laptops we've tested with the same processor, and our tests revealed that it was actually underclocking itself during parts of our tests.

### HALF MEASURES

The U2142 performed as expected in the image-encoding tests, reaching an average clock speed of around 2.5GHz, but this nose-dived to 1.3GHz when it started multitasking and encoding video, in effect cutting its speed in half. This makes its performance more like that of a Core i3 processor, which means you get far less processing power than you might

expect. We suspect this is due to the processor overheating, as there's very little room for ventilation, but it's disappointing.

Its graphics performance was equally poor, as it failed our Dirt Showdown test at High Quality settings and a 720p resolution. We had to reduce the quality settings to Ultra Low and disable anti-aliasing to get a playable 30fps, and even then the fans were noisy. We'd recommend sticking to older, less

demanding titles or 2D games.

The 11.6in touchscreen won't make the most of your photos, films and games, as its image quality is below average. Its 1,366x768 resolution looks fine and its 10-point touchscreen is very responsive but, as with Gigabyte's S1082 tablet, there's a visible grain from the display coating that makes the screen look hazy and pixelated.

The matt finish keeps reflections at bay, but it amplifies the effect of the screen's coating by sapping the vibrancy from colours. Reds, greens and blues lacked depth and richness, and whites looked grey in our solid colour image tests. Its black levels were reasonable, though, as was its contrast, which revealed plenty of detail in our high-contrast

test photos. The viewing

angles are rather limited, as we could barely see anything onscreen when it was

lying flat on our desk or when we tilted the screen backwards and forwards.

Typing on the U2142 was pleasant, if not flawless. The Chiclet-style keys rattle too much for our liking, but they're well-spaced and give plenty of feedback. We found the touchpad frustrating, as it's too easy to touch accidentally while typing. This made writing long documents annoying as the cursor was often being sent all over the page.

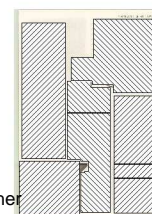
Luckily, one of the function buttons disables the touchpad, although this means you're limited to the touchscreen for navigating the Desktop. We were also disappointed that the touchpad doesn't support multi-touch gestures or Windows 8 shortcuts, as this should be standard now.

The U2142's battery life was more promising, as it lasted six hours and seven minutes in our light-usage battery test with the screen set to half brightness. We've seen better, but it's quite good for an Ultrabook.

### SLOT MACHINE

Another redeeming feature is the wide selection of ports. There are two USB3 and two USB ports, HDMI and VGA outputs, a SIM card slot for mobile broadband, an SD card reader, a Gigabit Ethernet port and separate headphone and microphone jacks. We'd recommend plugging in a pair of dedicated speakers for music, as the integrated speakers are very tinny and produce no bass at all.

Sadly, lots of ports and a decent battery life aren't enough to save Gigabyte's U2142 as



it has far too many basic problems that affect its overall usability. At this price, you'd be much better off with Samsung's Best-Buy winning Series 7 Ultra.

SPECIFICATIONS

**CPU** 1.8GHz Intel Core i5-3337U  
**RAM** 4GB  
**STORAGE** 128GB SSD  
**GRAPHICS** Intel HD Graphics 4000  
**OPTICAL DRIVE** None  
**DISPLAY** 11.6in widescreen LCD touchscreen (1,366x768)  
**OPERATING SYSTEM** Windows 8  
**DIMENSIONS** 20x298x226mm, 1.4kg  
**POWER CONSUMPTION** 1W standby, 14W idle, 31W active  
**WARRANTY** Two-year RTB  
**PART CODE** U2412  
**DETAILS** [www.giga-byte.com](http://www.giga-byte.com)

