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## FIRST TEST



### Wide boy

Many LCDs intended as second-room sets have 4:3 screen ratios, which means they can't display movies without 'black bars'. Happily, the JVC below is a 16:9 widescreen set.



### Rival buy

Philips' 20in 20PF8846 makes an ideal set for the bedroom or kitchen. It may not look as stylish as the JVC, but its images are just as attractive and it costs around £500.

### FEATURES

Integrated Freeview and analogue tuners; seven-day EPG; Nicam stereo; Hyper sound; noise reduction; colour temperature presets; PC picture-in-picture; tabletop stand included; 2 x 5W speakers; TV-Link

### CONNECTIONS

Scart x2 (both RGB); component video in; stereo audio in; S-video in; composite video in; subwoofer out; D-Sub 15-pin PC in; Common Interface Slot; headphone jack; PC audio in

### CONTACT

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'Motion is handled very well, with no noticeable blur or jerkiness during quick camera pans'

# JVC LT-23D50

Can this stylish small-screen JVC prove it's more than just a pretty face?

## THE FLAT FACTS

- 23IN 16:9 LCD TV
- £750-£900
- HD-READY: NO
- RESOLUTION 1,366 x 768
- SPEAKERS: YES
- TV TUNER: YES
- SCARTS: 2 (RGB)

**A**n LCD of just 23in might seem destined for the bedroom, but this set from JVC is so well presented that it actually looks a lot bigger than it is. Dressed in an inky black surround with metallic, bottom-mounted speaker grilles and perched on an understated desktop stand, the screen is pushed outwards and could look very stylish in a small living room.

Connectivity isn't bad either. With two RGB Scarts, component video and PC inputs, all that's really missing is a digital input – and watching high-definition at 23in probably isn't an option in any case.

Features are limited to a picture-in-picture mode for dual PC/video use, a sleep timer and child lock, but while picture processing is scant, it does include a handy noise reduction facility. That's alongside the normal tweaks for contrast/brightness and sharpness, and basic colour temp presets.

### Digital delight

The L-23D50's star turn, however, is to give us a Freeview tuner – something that's still rare on LCDs of this size, despite being very handy. Setting up channels is simple and quick, and there's a seven-day EPG. What's more, Freeview pictures are tightly presented, with studio-based channels such as BBC News 24 looking especially good.

Of course, movies are more our thing, so we popped in *2046*, an excellent slice of ponderous futuristic paranoia, and ran it through those component video inputs. The colours of the cityscapes and clubs initially looked muted and pale and the picture a touch noisy, with backgrounds in particular suffering from softness and grain. A little time spent with the oh-so-simple on-screen menus was very rewarding, however – it brightened up proceedings and almost completely removed any trace of noise.

### Warming up

While this restored colours to vibrancy, skin tones still looked a little green, but switching the colour temperature presets to 'warm' gave a more palatable, if a little orange, glow to Tony Yeong's struggling journalist character. No major problems yet.

Moreover, motion was handled very well, with no noticeable blur or jerkiness as actors rush across the shot or cameras pan quickly across a scene.

There is a slight 'black hole' approach to large areas of black in images, with Leong's dark suit looking hollow at times, but in all but the darkest of scenes there's still more than enough black level response to cope with shadows and the detail contained within them.

Also detailed are the speakers, which managed to deliver clear dialogue and a bit of oomph for our movie's soundtrack – even if it was a little flat. We tried the 'Hyper Sound' mode, and must say that although the soundstage is impressively stretched, the dialogue seems to drift off to the edges. Still, it worked quite well in a small room.

With a good Freeview tuner, pleasing DVD performance and admirable sound – all in a gorgeous frame – the L-23D50 comes highly recommended for daily use. With a not quite outstanding performance, the price tag may seem a little high, considering that for just a bit extra you can get an HD-ready, 27in LCD – but it's still money well spent. **WP**

## RATINGS

PICTURE	★★★★☆
SOUND	★★★★☆
CONNECTIONS	★★★★☆
FEATURES	★★★★☆
EASE OF USE	★★★★☆
VALUE	★★★☆☆

## VERDICT ★★★★★

A very stylish addition to a bedroom or small living room, at a slightly high price

