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How to Choose a Monitor

Are you looking for a computer monitor? Monitors are your window into the computer - everything that happens in your software and applications happens via the monitor. It is hence very important to choose a good monitor to go along with your new PC.

Traditionally, CRT (cathode ray tube) monitors have been used for desktop computers. However, these days, LCD (liquid crystal display) monitors are selling like hotcakes.

It's easy to see why: LCD monitors are easier on the eyes, have very crisp image quality and yes, they're sexy and cool. Laptops also use LCD screens - so we're slowly beginning to see CRT monitors being phased out.

Which type you choose depends on your requirements. If you're a graphics professional, you may prefer a CRT monitor because they are said to show more realistic colors. However, the latest high-end LCDs can also give equal color quality. If you with text most of the time, a LCD is a good choice because the various pixels that you find on a LCD will have nicely defined edges. This gives sharp and focus letters on the screen.

To help you choose a monitor that'll meet your needs, this article will step through the factors to consider when buying a LCD or CRT monitor.

LCD Monitors

Let's first look at the various factors you need to think about when purchasing a LCD display.

Panel Size

In an LCD monitor, the panel size reflects the viewable area you can use. Again, the measurement is made diagonally from one corner of the screen to the opposite corner. LCD panel sizes now range from 15 inches up to 23 inches.

Native Resolution

An LCD panel display always has a certain native resolution. Usually you can go lower than this resolution but the image will appear blurry. If you need to change your monitor resolution quite often, then a CRT monitor may be a better bet. LCD native resolutions currently range from 1024 by 768 to 1600 by 1200.

Viewing Angle

One problem specific to LCD monitors is the fact that you cannot see what is displayed if you move off to the side of the monitor too much. A greater viewing angle is therefore typically better - especially if you need to show presentations to others on the LCD screen very often.

CRT Monitors

Now let's take a look at some things you need to look out for when purchasing a CRT display.

Tube Size and Viewable Area

The tube size and viewable area of a CRT monitor is of utmost importance. The tube size helps you judge how much room you'll need for the monitor on your desk. It is expressed in inches measured from one corner of the monitor to the opposite corner.

The viewable area (also measured diagonally) indicates how much you'll be able to see on a screen. The viewable area of CRTs can range from 15 inches all the way up to 22 inches.

Tube Type

You'll need to think about tube type as well. Traditional CRTs have curved screens, while newer models usually have flat screens. Flat screens improve clarity and reduce glare, so you should think of getting one if you want to reduce eye strain and fatigue.

Maximum Resolution and Refresh Rate

A CRT monitor's maximum resolution can range from 1024 by 768 at 75 Hz all the way up to 2048 by 1536 at 70 Hz. For normal home use, 1024 by 768 at 75 Hz is sufficient. Try to ensure your CRT monitor supports refresh rates above 70 Hz - anything below 70 Hz can result in screen flicker and cause eye strain.

Dot Pitch

The dot pitch of a CRT monitor helps you determine how sharp a picture will be - these can range from 0.24 mm to 0.28 mm. A smaller dot pitch number often indicates a sharper image. Of course, to the untrained eye, the differences in image quality due to dot pitch may not be discernable. Hence, the dot pitch may not be an important consideration if you're not too concerned about the finest details in your screen images.

Conclusion

I hope the above has helped you understand what factors to look out for when buying a LCD or CRT monitor. One thing to always remember when buying a new monitor - don't throw away your old one! Re-use it for an old PC or give it to a friend who needs one. By not dumping that old monitor, you'll certainly help to save the environment.



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