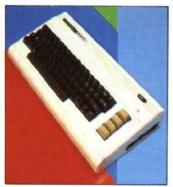## COMMODORE 64
TYPICAL PRICE: £299
STANDARD MEMORY: 64K
EXPANDABLE TO: Non-expandable
CONNECTS TO: Cassette, TV, monitor, disk drive, printer, joystick.

ADVANTAGES: Very fast screen graphics/Clear sound.

DISADVANTAGES: The BASIC can often be awkward.

SUMMARY: As a home computer the Commodore 64 is good value. It can also be used as a business machine, but this requires expensive add-ons.
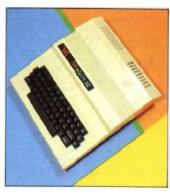

COMMODORE VIC 20
TYPICAL PRICE: £130 inc. extras
STANDARD MEMORY: 5K
EXPANDABLE TO: 32K
CONNECTS TO: Cassette, TV, monitor, disk drive, printer, joysticks.

ADVANTAGES: Typewriter-style keyboard/ROM cartridge options/ Good quality sound/Wide choice of software.

DISADVANTAGES: Small standard memory size.

SUMMARY: Very popular, but cheaper and equally powerful machines provide more memory. Needs the memory expanded to fulfil its capabilities.

DRAGON 32
TYPICAL PRICE: £175
STANDARD MEMORY: 32K
EXPANDABLE TO: 64K
CONNECTS TO: Cassette, TV, printer, monitor, joystick.

ADVANTAGES: Typewriter-style keyboard/Fast BASIC/Software normally interchangeable with Tandy Color Computer.

DISADVANTAGES: Power socket easily damaged/Unconventional sockets for connecting peripherals.

SUMMARY: Although not outstanding in any way, a fairly priced and very popular machine.

EPSON HX20
TYPICAL PRICE: £486
STANDARD MEMORY: 16K
EXPANDABLE TO: 32K
CONNECTS TO: Cassette, printer, modem, plug-in cartridges.

ADVANTAGES: Typewriter-style keyboard/Built-in display, printer and cassette/Good software and maintenance support.

DISADVANTAGES: Built-in display limited to four lines at a time/Will not connect to a TV or monitor in the UK.

SUMMARY: Among the best-designed of portable computers. It includes an RS232 port and an expansion port.

SINCLAIR ZX81
TYPICAL PRICE: £45
STANDARD MEMORY: 1K + 16K
EXPANDABLE TO: 56K
CONNECTS TO: Cassette, TV, Microprinter.

ADVANTAGES: User definable characters add versatility/Very reasonably priced/Includes 16K RAM pack.

DISADVANTAGES: Touch-pad keyboard/Small size of machine makes it awkward to use.

SUMMARY: This computer lacks sophistication, but can be vastly improved by using a selection of the add-ons available.

SINCLAIR SPECTRUM
TYPICAL PRICE: £99/125
STANDARD MEMORY: 16K/48K
EXPANDABLE TO: 48K
CONNECTS TO: Cassette, TV, Microdrive, modem, Microprinter, joysticks.

ADVANTAGES: Very reasonably priced for a colour computer/Wide variety of games and other software available.

DISADVANTAGES: Very poor keyboard/Barely audible sound/ Temperamental tape load/Gets very hot after prolonged use.

SUMMARY: Very easy to use with an enormous choice of software and add-ons. This is an excellent choice for the beginner.

SORD M5
TYPICAL PRICE: £150
STANDARD MEMORY: 4K
EXPANDABLE TO: 36K
CONNECTS TO: Cassette, TV, printer, monitor, joystick, plug-in cartridges.

ADVANTAGES: Well-constructed/ Power-on indicator.

DISADVANTAGES: Keys too 'rubbery'/Limited BASIC.

SUMMARY: This is an expensive machine to expand. A fuller, and better, BASIC is planned for the future.

TI 99/4A
TYPICAL PRICE: £150
STANDARD MEMORY: 16K
EXPANDABLE TO: 52K
CONNECTS TO: Cassette, TV, monitor, joystick.

ADVANTAGES: Typewriter-style keyboard.

DISADVANTAGES: Extremely slow BASIC/Limited choice of software.

SUMMARY: The lack of software and the slow BASIC make this an unpopular machine. However, at £150 it is reasonably priced.