

Product : USB flash drive_AH421



Age
Thursday 3/01/2008
Page: 17
Section: Livewire
Region: Melbourne, AU
Circulation: 207000
Type: Capital City Daily
Size: 387.78 sq.cms.

LIVEWIRE ROAD TEST

Stick with it

Adam Turner looks at the range of USB storers and which is right for you.

MEMORY sticks are handy for keeping your important files on your person, but you need to decide which is best for you.

USB storage devices might seem the same, but they come in all shapes and sizes with a range of features. The point of a memory stick is to always be there when you need it, so look for something that you'll always remember to take with you as part of your "leaving the house" ritual.

Consider the things you never leave the house without — keys, phone, wallet or purse — and think how you might attach a USB device to one of them.

Some USB storage devices are sticks to hang from your keys or around your neck. Others are cards to slip in your wallet or mobile phone case.

A few are even cleverly hidden away in everyday devices such as pens, watches and other jewellery.

Considering the main advantage of a memory stick is portability and convenience, some USB devices are surprisingly inconvenient. If you're looking for a memory stick to hang from your key ring, make sure the stick itself attaches to your key ring rather than the cap. Otherwise you could find the cap dangling from your keys but the memory stick itself nowhere to be seen.

Even if a memory stick does attach directly to your key ring, don't trust it straight away as they're often very flimsy. Pull it, drop it, kick it — really put it to the test before you rely on

it to carry anything too valuable.

Today's memory sticks can store almost as much as a blank DVD, making them perfect for carrying around movies, music and photos, as well as important documents. If security is important, look for a memory stick with a hidden area for storing secret files. Also consider something with password protection or even a built-in fingerprint reader.

Take care when choosing a memory stick with security features if you intend to use it with computers you don't own (which is really the point of carrying a memory stick). Some memory sticks with security features require software to be installed on the computer before you can access the contents of the stick. This could be a problem if you're using the memory stick on a public computer, such as in a library or internet cafe, on which you're not allowed to install software. You could also run into difficulties if the software is only written for Microsoft Windows and you want to use the memory stick with an Apple Mac or Linux computer.

More expensive memory sticks will often handle the password or fingerprint processing on board, which means they should work with any computer.