

**Product:** iBook G4 1 GHz 14"  
**By:** Apple Computer  
**MSRP:** \$1,499.00  
**Street price:** \$1,4.79.00  
**Review date:** January 2, 2004

**Review by**

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**DESCRIPTION** (What's it do? What's it got?): 1 GHz PowerPC G4, 256K L2 cache @ 1 GHz, 14-inch TFT Display 1024x768 resolution 256MB DDR266 SDRAM, 60GB Ultra ATA drive, Combo Drive, ATI Mobility Radeon 9200, 32MB DDR video memory

**FIRST IMPRESSIONS:** I was looking to be impressed and I was. Every aspect of this latest generation iBook is just what it should be. A sturdy feeling, beautifully designed package -- including the packaging, itself -- that comes with everything most people need to start their new Mac experience.

**WHAT I FOUND:** When I began using the new 1 GHz iBook, the first thing I noticed was the nearly silent keyboard. The keys are quick, fluid and responsive. A very comfortable, yet solid, keyboard. The second thing is purely speed. From Photoshop to [my daughter's favorite] games that are notoriously taxing on a system, this box rocks! Apps launch in a flash and everything is great under Panther. I didn't want to do a "Panther" review, but it is clear that this hardware takes full advantage of the features with ease. In particular, Exposé is nearly instantaneous. I read a lot of comparisons between PowerBooks and iBooks before making this purchase that was intended to be solely for my daughter's use; however, the "users" and "sharing" control panels in the systems preferences were opened on day one after getting this thing set up.

**HOW EASY WAS INSTALLATION?:** This review is based on a template that I use for my product reviews and, in most hardware items, I usually omit this entry. For the iBook, there were some things to address that were important to mention in the set up, so here they are: First, you will want broadband. The modem works well and performance is up to par by modem standards; however, you'll want the modem for the fax features more than use with an ISP. Second, you will need to run your software update control panel more than once in most cases. This goes for any new Mac system and is really important to getting the most/best out of your new Mac. Third, once you know that you have restarted and rerun your updates so that they are all complete, you may want to add your peripherals. That might be a printer, iSight, scanner, iPod or whatever, and, for the most part, these items will plug in and go without a hitch. I would STILL recommend visiting [versiontracker.com](http://versiontracker.com) and/or the vendor's web site to be sure that you have the latest drivers for your products. This is a guideline more than a rule, so I'd also recommend taking a minute to read MacFixIt, and other online resources, to check on issues that may have already come up with some products.

**LIKES :** This box feels solid, well-built and it is really a wonderful product with a TON of bang for the buck. It will do everything you need it to do for most average daily Mac users and it has a gorgeous monitor that, once calibrated, gives you a very crisp and clear image that exceeds many other portables (including my trusty ol' TiBook). Of course, I added the AirPort Extreme card and the performance is flawless; completely living up to what is now the standard for WiFi reception set by this iBook's predecessors. The latches and hinges are strong and substantial so this is a terrific choice for students and professionals on the move.

**DISLIKES :** The 14" is a little heavier than some may like lugging around, but it is worth it. At just under six pounds, it is a solid six and may seem a little bulky for its size. I recommend a good padded case and bag if you will make this another of your appendages. I'd really like to see the maximum RAM amount go up to 1 GB, as well.

**HOW DOES THIS PRODUCT COMPARE? :** Well, I'm sure you have seen all of the online reports about iBook vs. PowerBook. What I can say is this: I have set up quite a few PowerBooks and iBook for clients and family with excellent results from them all. A lot depends on the need for features and size. If you want/need FireWire 800 and more RAM than the 640 Mb max, go for the PowerBook.

**RECOMMEND TO A FRIEND?:** 100% -- Great for nearly any user on any level.

**FINAL THOUGHTS:** This is one great Mac. If you use your "tried and true" apps and hardware or are looking to learn the latest and greatest, you get all that and more in a package that should stand the test of time like all Macs. Special promotions are not always up front on some resellers sites or locations, so be sure to ask and/or look around for some great deals, add-on promotions and pricing incentives.

**OVERALL RATING: 5 of 5 stars EXCELLENT**

**For more information, visit:** <http://www.apple.com/ibook/>

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