

Real People Reviews

by Daniel M. East

Product: Ultra-Mini Optical Mouse (USB)
Manufacturer/Vendor/Developer: Targus
MSRP: 19.99
Street price: 18 - 19 dollars
Review date: 25 January, 2004



DESCRIPTION (What's it do? What's it got?): This is one small mouse! Designed for portability and affordability, this optical mouse is perfect if you have an iBook, PowerBook or just have a very, very tiny desk. It is a mouse that offers a retractable cable (great for travelers) and a clean, ergo design .

MIN. SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS: Any USB Mac

FIRST IMPRESSIONS: For a few applications, my Ti's trackpad just isn't quite enough. Ok, I admit it; the "lipstick" optical mouse just isn't for me, so I needed something portable that offered the features I need in a desktop mouse in a package small enough to travel on my many flights and onsite situations.

LIKES : First of all, I know why they call it "Ultra-Mini." This thing is about the size of an import car key in length and has a scroll wheel, two button design that gives me all of the features I need just short of a trackball. The retractable cable is a real plus for air travel and the cable restraints at each end feel solid. The optical tracking is surprising accurate for this size and I can even use it on my lap or a random jewel case if need be. This little gem gives you all of the features you want in a mouse that isn't so small that you lose precision when, for example, working in Illustrator or FreeHand.

DISLIKES : Although not a major issue, right out of the box, you have no use of the right button. Another consideration is that there are no grips on this little guy and it can get away from you if you are really a power user on your desktop. I'd like to see a simple rubberized adhesive grip on either side. One other issue, although not for me, is that this is designed as a right-handed mouse only, so southpaws - be aware. While this tracks well on even hairline drawings, it is clearly not for this purpose but that isn't necessarily a bad thing. You don't want to use too many shortcuts for projects that require precision. It was very effective in iPhoto and Photoshop for simple retouching and even patch tool work.

HOW DOES THIS PRODUCT COMPARE? : There are quite a few mice in the mini variety and I chose the Targus for size and features. LabTec's 800 dpi is clearly heavier and larger, although I like the ambidextrous usability and "feel" of the piece. For the same dollar amount, IOGears selectable DPI Mini Mouse is an excellent choice although just a little larger in overall size with a slightly higher price-point at approx. 25.00 street price.

WHO MIGHT ENJOY THIS PRODUCT? If you have a need for a good mouse with little real estate to run it on, this is your mouse. Great for any kind of mobile computing for nearly any location as well as being a terrific option for very young children who need a mouse that will fit just right into their littler hands - especially at this price.

TEST SYSTEM: Apple Titanium PowerBook G4 500 - 1Gb RAM - 10.3.2

FINAL THOUGHTS: While I am really happy with this great little mouse, I believe that a few little details will make it a superior one. If you need this size for travel, kids or small workspaces, you'll be very happy with Targus' Ultra-Mini Optical mouse.

OVERALL RATING: 3.5 out of 5 VERY GOOD

For more information, visit: <http://www.targus.com/us/>

Daniel East is the founder and president of The Mid-Atlantic Macintosh User Groups Team (MaMUGs) - a division of The Apple Groups Team; a member of The Apple Consultants Network (ACN); a member of The Apple Developer Connection (ACN); a panelist on "PC Talk Radio;" a live speaker/presenter and a freelance columnist for several Mac publications.

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