

## HP Forum Archive 13

[ [Return to Index](#) | [Top of Index](#) ]

### 11c Voyager

Message #1 Posted by [Ted](#) on 3 June 2003, 8:05 a.m.

Well, I'm new here after years of my (continuing) love affair with my HP41C. And I know you guys are all going to yawn at this posting, but anyway here goes:

I just got my first Voyager series: an 11c from 1986. Via eBay. Quality turned out far better than I could have dreamed. Although I had once seen a Voyager type (probably a 12c) years ago, this is the first one I have ever owned- spurred on by the threads here and in archives.

Why this posting: just to comment on the fact that this series seems to be just fantastic for me as a newbie- I now understand completely why so many people are so enthusiastically loyal. It's layout is wonderful, keys well spaced with secure solid movement, extremely compact, and the screen is very high contrast under all conditions. I truly don't know what you could make 'better' than the Voyager series for a calculator without whistles. And all that in 1986. If any original developers are around, then hats off to you all!

### If I may, welcome to the "Voyager" gang...

Message #2 Posted by [Vieira, Luiz C. \(Brazil\)](#) on 3 June 2003, 8:41 a.m.,  
in response to message #1 by [Ted](#)

Hi, Ted;

I'm an unconditional Voyager Fan; the other one I know is a declared fan is Valentin Albito, that claims to love them. I take it as honest as almost all (if not all) of his proposed "quizzes" are voyager-related. As he, I prefer the HP15C: think of an HP11C with  $2.5 \times$  memory space (448 program steps), complex numbers handling, matrices handling, and the HP34C's like numerical integrate and Solver (AKA root finder). The HP11C is something, too.

Except for the HP10C, I have all others. And use them as well.

Best regards.

Luiz C. Vieira - Brazil

### Don't you know more fans, Luiz? :-)

Message #3 Posted by [R Lion](#) on 3 June 2003, 10:30 a.m.,  
in response to message #2 by [Vieira, Luiz C. \(Brazil\)](#)

Quote:

the other one I know is a declared fan is Valentin Albito, that claims to love them

Umm... think a little more: sure you know more Voyager fans...

Raul

### Of course, my friend...

Message #4 Posted by [Vieira, Luiz C. \(Brazil\)](#) on 3 June 2003, 11:12 a.m.,  
in response to message #3 by [R Lion](#)

... I just mentioned Valentin because he posted, at least twice here, the words: "I love Voyagers!".

I'm confident many others, you and I included, that have them as preferable ones. I know good mentionings are harmless, but they lead to responsibilities... ;^) As you posted now, I feel relieved.

Thank you.

Luiz C. Vieira - Brazil

(I'm still worried about your HP15C; I sent you an e-mail a few minutes ago)

## **Voyagers rule ! [LONG]**

Message #5 Posted by **Valentin Albillo** on 3 June 2003, 1:00 p.m.,  
in response to message #2 by *Vieira, Luiz C. (Brazil)*

Luiz's right, I've always loved Voyager series calculators since I was presented with a beautiful HP-11C by my good friend Fernando del Rey (hi, Fernando !) some 22 years ago.

I was the proud owner of a fully fledged HP-41C at the time, yet was impressed with the sheer quality of that early, USA model 11C. I found it utterly amazing, elegant, stylish, cool, it transpired overall quality, so much so that I took it with me for a year in the military, out there in the desertic sands of some African region.

It withstood incredibly hot weather, dust, everything, always working and looking perfectly. I wrote several programs for it during my stay, and everyone there (not the most knowledgeable people on calculator matters, to be sure, though they were amenable) was most impressed with it, to the point that I had to *\*very politely\** decline the request of a certain top brass who wanted to purchase it from me. It still is with me, looking mint and working flawlessly, with its recently installed third set of batteries.

Now, if the HP-11C is amazing, the HP-15C is simply unbelievable, the best pure calculator in the world, hands down. It has everything the HP-11C has, and much, much more. Would you believe it has more than 150 different STO (store) instructions, for instance ? Even though the Voyager series were released as a stopgap series while work on the HP-71B continued, to the point of not having any internal codename, the HP-15C was much more powerful than the mighty HP-41 in many ways.

For instance, its batteries would last forever, no NiCd's to corrode contacts. It was better built, its display was much more readable. It had more memory for programs or data than the basic HP-41C, and further most of the instructions took only 1 byte. It had a tremendous instruction set, including all 12 conditional tests and recall arithmetic, hyperbolics, gamma, random numbers, linear regression, 7 levels of subroutines. And to top it all, it had fast, microcode matrix operations, including system solving, full support of complex numbers including a parallel RPN stack and all arithmetic and trascendental functions, and last but certainly not least, Solve and Integrate.

In a word, I could do things with it that would be impossible to do in a basic HP-41C, and would require lengthy programming to achieve and a lot of money for extra RAM (no HP-41CV/CX then, no Quad RAM module, no Advantage ROM) to try and achieve them somehow, even if by means of slow and lengthy user code programs. It's no wonder that I would admire and treasure the HP-15C, then. Further, everything was so well thought in its design that you would normally find several ways to do the same difficult thing with it. You felt there were no arbitrary limitations at all. If some combination would make sense, most probably it was available. All features were integrated and complemented each other perfectly, most served for several apparently unrelated purposes.

There's never been anything like the HP-15C, there never was before, and there never will be in the future, as long as replicators do not enter the scene. I've said it before and I'll repeat it once more: get yourself one before the prices are impossible. Now, they're just very expensive. Soon, they will be unaffordable. And time is *\*not\** on your side.

## **Re: Voyagers rule !**

Message #6 Posted by **Bill Platt** on 3 June 2003, 1:43 p.m.,  
in response to message #5 by *Valentin Albillo*

Valentin,

Now you are making such a good case for the 15c that the price will probably double in the next week;)

But seriously, the 15c was the model that I really wanted to get, back in my college days, but the 11c was good enough for my relatively simplistic needs.

It is absolutely true that the layout of the 15c, and also the 11c, is just about perfect--in the sense that the locations of functions are logical, and complementary.

But I have found the 32sii to be nearly as logical--though the menus sometimes still give me consternation (it is so much more straightforward when all functions are on keys). I do not use matrix calcs much, and never complex numbers, and so that is why I am happy with the 32sii. But I really like the 48G for its list operations.....that is another topic. And the menus there *\*really\** consternate...it takes a lot of practice.....

I am very curious about your thoughts on the design and effectiveness of two other calculators---in fact the ones that, I suppose, inherited the 15c market position: the 42s and the 48 series. What are your thoughts?

It seems that HP carried out a major consolidation in their RPN line in the late 80's through hthe 90's--as they added Algebraics to the mix.

At the beginning of the 80's (correct me if I'm wrong) we had scientifics, simultaneously, 34c, 41C, 10c, 11c, 15c, 16c (sort of a scientific) ,and of course 41v/x later, and 28c/slater and no 10c initially, and dropped 34c. But the point is that they maintained

11c, 15c, 41 simultaneously, then had 32s, 42s, 41 simultaneously, and then we end up with just the 32sii and 48---no "middle ground" or really, no high end pure calculator anymore. Yet all those algebraics proliferated, 20s 21s 22s 27s 10b 17b 19b.

So entering the 80,s there were 4 simultaeous scientific models, and in the mid 90's just 2 (or 1.5, to account for the graphing).

regards,

Bill

### **Re: Voyagers (also) Rule!**

Message #7 Posted by **Michael F. Coyle** on 3 June 2003, 7:14 p.m.,  
in response to message #6 by Bill Platt

Hi Bill,

I just posted a message in another thread singing the praises of Woodstocks, but I don't think there's a requirement that I be monogamous to one calculator, or even to one product line, so I guess it's okay. Since you also wanted to know how the 48 fits into the big scheme of things, I'll also include my comments on that too, at no extra charge :)

My day-in, day-out machine is an 11C. (I also have a 16C but use it less.) It is actually my third 11C (I lost the first and the second one died). I have never tried the 15C; my work never needs complex numbers and I don't do matrix math very often, so the 11C is all I've ever needed.

The reliability is fine, battery life approaches the infinite, and I find the key layout intuitive. I also like the ability to stuff it into a short pocket.

A few months ago, I decided to get a 48GX, for two reasons: I wanted to leave the 11C safe at home, and I wanted to play with something new and advanced. RPL looked interesting. I decided against the 49G due to its rubbery keys and regretable color scheme. I figured I had better buy now. I was worried that HP might replace the 48 with something of poorer quality, and then I'd be stuck trying to by a used 48. But if HP did replace the 48 with something better, I could always upgrade.

My feelings about the 48 are mixed. I have really enjoyed owning and using it. RPL is a very good language, with good structured programming concepts and support for powerful data types, such as lists. Recently, I had to spend a day at the doctor's office with my father. I used the 48 to compute and plot Fourier transforms of some data relating to a project. I can't think of any other platform this small that would have been as easy to use.

But...the 48 is big. Since it doesn't come with a cover to protect the LCD, I had to buy a hard case. It still fits into my briefcase, but takes up a lot more room than the 11C. It also takes more keystrokes to get simple jobs done. This is a real pain -- on the 11C no function was more than two keystrokes away.

So I'd say that for me, the 48 is a qualified success. It's very powerful and easy to use for large problems but too big and cumbersome to be a truly satisfactory 11C replacement. I don't think that it's just a toy, suitable for students but not real engineers, as some here have suggested. (Though for me, it scores very highly as a truly educational toy -- and here I mean "toy" in it's best sense.)

Fred A. Valdez, HP's head honcho calculator guy, promises new scientific calculators that "...will be offered at *several different price points* in order to give our customers *more options* and more value." (Italics mine.) I sure hope so. Graphing calcs are fine, but we desperately need a simpler high-quality shirt-pocket RPN machine. Hopefully they have something good in the pipeline. (And maybe someone from HP is reading this and will make me a beta tester!)

- Michael

### **Do you have a dead HP11C?**

Message #8 Posted by **Vieira, Luiz C. (Brazil)** on 3 June 2003, 11:29 p.m.,  
in response to message #7 by Michael F. Coyle

Hi, Michae;

You wrote:

Quote:

It is actually my third 11C (I lost the first and the second one died).

What happened to it? If it is still with you, aren't you interested in gioiving "the girl" a second try?

If so, let us know. Let's rock this babe up!

**Re: Do you have a dead HP11C?**

Message #9 Posted by **Michael F. Coyle** on 4 June 2003, 1:04 p.m.,  
in response to message #8 by Vieira, Luiz C. (Brazil)

Hi Luiz,

No, I don't have the dead 11C. When it stopped working I sent it in to HP; they sold me a replacement 11C. (Made in Brazil, S/N 2908Bxxxxx, with painted-on key legends. Has worked fine for >= 10 years now.)

I don't have any broken calculators here but I'll try to fix that in the future :)

- Michael

**Re: Voyagers rule ! [LONG]**

Message #10 Posted by **Valentin Albillo** on 4 June 2003, 7:02 a.m.,  
in response to message #6 by Bill Platt

Hi Bill & everyone reading this thread:

Bill posted:

*"I have found the 32sii to be nearly as logical -- though the menus sometimes still give me consternation [ ... ] I really like the 48G for its list operations [...] and the menus there \*really\* consternate"*

That's the problem: I do not want to be \*consternated\* by my chosen calculator, but \*awed\*, delighted. Nothing in the HP-15C causes consternation. On the contrary, you feel *awed* by how everything fits and how complete the instruction set is, by the lack of arbitrary restrictions and senseless nuisances imposed not by any sound engineering principles but for the sake of questionable marketing ideas and cost reductions.

*"I am very curious about your thoughts on the design and effectiveness of two other calculators--in fact the ones that, I suppose, inherited the 15c market position: the 42s and the 48 series. What are your thoughts?"*

Well, answering questions like yours is bound to upset a number of people if they happen to disagree with my views about their beloved calculators, but keeping in mind that *this is just my own, personal, humble opinion and I make no pretense to be the one who is right*, here it is:

Reusing the formerly expressed concept, I find that both models, the 42S and the 48 series do *consternate* me. Big time.

Take for instance the 42S. It could have been a terrific, worthy successor for the 41CX. It has nearly full compatibility and lots of well-conceived extensions. But then lightning did strike and we were left with much cause for consternation, both minor and major. Among the minor, the dreadful menus, most noticeably the alpha menu, forcing you to press several keystrokes for a single alpha character in a machine that so badly needs to have a quick way of spelling function names to avoid navigating menus all the time.

Among the major, the fact that it has relatively large RAM (7Kb/32 Kb) but *no I/O* is a BIG consternation, if there ever was one. It's such a letdown as to render the machine unsuitable for most of the uses the HP-41C was put to. With my 41CX, I had lots of card holders, and felt comfortable with the thought that I could load any of those wonderful programs in the machine in seconds. No fast changing of batteries. No dread of memory lost when playing with synthetics. No problem erasing a 1,000 line Othello program in order to fit something new, I could reload it most easily. All that is lost with the 42S, and that does consternate me. Also, the fact that its internals uselessly mimic 41CX codes makes it far slower than it should, and it's maddening to know that it's a *completely pointless degradation*, as there's no use in mimicking internal 41C codes if there's no way to load a 41C program recorded on cards, tapes, disks, or some other mass storage devices.

So, the 42S is useless to me. For use as a calculator, I still feel the HP-15C can easily hold against it. For use as a 'program runner', I'll never feel confident painfully keying in a large program or programs, to see them turn into thin air when changing batteries or for some other reason, or having to remove them to make room for data or other programs, at the cost of having to key them again. This is not an issue for 448 bytes of RAM, but certainly *is* for 7,000 or 32,768 bytes for that matter.

And as far as specifications and features go, if I ever need more pocketable computing power than my HP-15C has, I never resort to the HP42S, but to my trusty HP-71C, which together with its 160 Kb RAM, Math ROM, and Forth/Assembler ROM can run rings around anything the 42S can offer in terms of functionality, programmability and ergonomics, not to mention I/O.

As for the 48/49 series, there the consternation reaches epic proportions, but as this message is already way too long, I'll leave that for another suitable occasion. Let me say just one thing: the 48 series is RPN/RPL's "Peter's Principle" come true.

Nuff said ! :-)

Best regards.

*Edited: 4 June 2003, 7:28 a.m.*

### **Re: Voyagers rule !**

*Message #11 Posted by [Ellis Easley](#) on 4 June 2003, 9:16 a.m.,  
in response to message #10 by Valentin Albillo*

It might mean something that the 15C has the highest "list price" at the "hpcalcman" web site (a retail outlet of used HP calculators that is advertising in the Museum classified ads right now).

### **I agree in almost all...**

*Message #12 Posted by [R Lion](#) on 4 June 2003, 6:34 p.m.,  
in response to message #10 by Valentin Albillo*

I agree with you in the 15c!!: the best "pure" calc.

The 42s is a great machine but I agree with you in the big consternation of no I/O with so large RAM. (and it is ugly, isn't it? :-P)

...but I can't feel the same about the 48: be patient with RPL and the menus and you'll be rewarded with one of the most powerful and incredible machines...

Sure Voyager rules,...and the 48 with good software... wow!

Raul

(as you said: *just my own, personal, humble opinion and I make no pretense to be the one who is right*)

### **Re: 11c Voyager**

*Message #13 Posted by [james \(UK\)](#) on 3 June 2003, 8:48 a.m.,  
in response to message #1 by Ted*

I've been impressed by the feel and look of the Voyagers as well. I picked up a 12C a week ago to try one out - has a nice quality feel to it but I miss the <-R from my 41, not to mention the letters. Of course, having used the 12 I now lust after a 15C, but not at \$300 upwards!

### **Re: 11c Voyager**

*Message #14 Posted by [Ron Ross](#) on 3 June 2003, 9:53 a.m.,  
in response to message #13 by james (UK)*

The 12c is a poor comparison to the 11c or 15c as THEY DO HAVE number delete and NOT X register delete. The 12c would substitute for Stats and is a good financial, BUT IT IS NOT A scientific!

I am a big fan of the 15C also. I actually like the layout of the Voyager's best, nice size, etc.

### **Re: 11c Voyager**

*Message #15 Posted by [David Ramsey](#) on 3 June 2003, 11:16 a.m.,  
in response to message #14 by Ron Ross*

OK, what's so great about the Voyagers?

Fortunately, I started collecting HP handhelds about 20 years ago (triggered by stumbling across my 19C in my garage), and my collection now is pretty much complete. To rub it in I'll note that I was able to simply walk into stores and buy th 10, 11, 15, and 16C off the shelf, and except for the 16C they've never really been used. Wish I'd kept the boxes, but who knew? At the time I didn't even know anyone else collected the things!

The Voyagers are tiny and fit well in a shirt pocket, but I find their "sideways" format less satisfying to hold in the hand. I'd grab almost any "vertical" HP calc first for real use.

### **Re: Why**

*Message #16 Posted by [Ron Ross](#) on 3 June 2003, 12:08 p.m.,  
in response to message #15 by David Ramsey*


First, if you do use a calculator with one hand, the Voyagers will never work that well for you.

But when I carried the 15c, it was in my pocket while I carried my books to class. Then it went onto a desk, either at a library or class or lab. Since it was my first Hp, I grew to love that particular layout. It is very intuitive and the calculator is better made than anything Hp ever released afterwards (actually, better made than any before as well, and they were made to be repaired, though I suspect they weren't).

However, for power and ease of use, the 42s does blow it away. I use the 42s much more and it is a big step up. However, if all I needed was an RPN scientific, I would go back to the 15c (okay, it really is all I need, but I like my security blanket).

---

[\[ Return to Index | Top of Index \]](#)

 [Go back to the main exhibit hall](#)