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Please vote: Which is YOUR FAVOURITE CALCULATOR ?

Message #1 Posted by [Statistics](#) on 11 Nov 2003, 11:37 a.m.

PLEASE VOTE

1) Which is your favorite calculator ? (give 1 or more with ranking)

OPTIONAL (BRIEF) COMMENTS:

2) Why ?

Controversy is welcome. Also non-HP are allowed

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE !

#####

Edited: 11 Nov 2003, 12:01 p.m. after one or more responses were posted

Far too simple

Message #2 Posted by [Valentin Albillo](#) on 11 Nov 2003, 11:53 a.m.,
in response to message #1 by [Statistics](#)

You can't simply ask for "the best calculator ever built", because there are many specialized calculators for special needs, which really don't compare.

Just for instance, there are financial calculators (HP-12, Sharp PC-1421), scientific calculators (HP-15C, Sharp PC-1350), graphic calculators (HP48/49), computer science calculators (HP-16C), statistical calculators, etc, etc.

IMHO, you can't meaningfully compare a Financial HP-12C calculator versus a Computer Science HP-16C, or the HP-16C versus the HP42S, they're really very different beasts and its kinda comparing apples with oranges.

Thus, I'd suggest that you modify your request to specify categories as well: Best Financial Calculator, Best Scientific Calculator, Best Graphic Calculator, etc, etc.

Even so, probably it wouldn't be fair comparing vintage machines versus newer ones: Is an HP42S better than an HP-65 ? Isn't that unfair to the HP-65 ? But I won't go into that ...

Best regards from V.

Re: Far too simple

Message #3 Posted by **Statistics** on 11 Nov 2003, 12:03 p.m.,
in response to message #2 by Valentin Albillo

Valentin, you are completely right! Sorry!

I already have changed the formulation. Hope it's alright now ...

Thank you for your advice, best regards, S.

#####

For those who read the thread and do not know about what has been discussed here, here is my explanation:

I had asked for

- 1) the best calculator ever built (your own subjective/personal opinion)
- 2) your favorite calc
- 3) if not identical: Why is your favorite not the best calc ? (this may be different although not in general: e.g. "your favorite is the hp-12c because you are a banker, but the best calc is the hp-49g+")

But see Valentin's concerns regarding the formulation of the question. And indeed he is right, so I have changed the text of the voting request.

Edited: 11 Nov 2003, 12:24 p.m.

Re: ### Please vote: WHICH is the BEST CALCULATOR ever built ?

Message #4 Posted by **Dave** on 11 Nov 2003, 12:05 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Statistics

1) What is the best calculator ever built ? (give 1 or more with ranking)

Only one that can be the best is the HP-41 series

2) What is your favorite calculator ?

Why ask after my first answer - the HP-41 series

3) If 1) not equal 2): Why isn't the best calc your favorite ? :-)

Boy these are silly questions - do not accept any other answer other than the obvious - the HP-41 series DUH!

4) Why is the chosen calc the best? (main reason(s) only)

It led the way in many ways and was basically infinitely expandable and was a calculator and not a computational instrument (ie no CAS)

It was fun and has never been topped as a calculator...

Who said we were congenial????

Again .. accept no substitutes or imitations... The Hp-41 series rules and will never be supplanted as the best calculating system ever!

Controversy is welcome.

There is no controversy as there is only one right answer!

Re: ### Please vote: WHICH is the BEST CALCULATOR ever built ? ###

Message #5 Posted by [Masao Kinoshita](#) on 11 Nov 2003, 2:50 p.m.,
in response to message #4 by Dave

IMHO, the HP 65 was the greatest calculator ever built. No other calculator, AFAIK, got BANNED by the FSU Chemistry department for use on exams.

Re: ### Please vote: WHICH is the BEST CALCULATOR ever built ? ###

Message #6 Posted by [Masao Kinoshita](#) on 11 Nov 2003, 2:58 p.m.,
in response to message #5 by Masao Kinoshita

IMHO, the HP 65 was the greatest calculator ever built. No other calculator, AFAIK, got BANNED by the FSU Chemistry department for use on exams.

*** The HP 65 was just plain AWESOME in its day!!! *** Later calculators may have been more powerful, e.g. HP 67, HP 41CVX, HP 48SX/GX, but they just did not have the same awe inspiring feeling of the HP 65.

Hp-42s is the BEST ever !!!

Message #7 Posted by [Ray F.Dutta](#) on 12 Nov 2003, 9:54 a.m.,
in response to message #4 by Dave

My choice:

absolutely clear: Hp-42S is much better than everything, than Hp-48, Hp-49, Hp-71b !

It is even MUCH better than the good Hp-41cx !!! (Dave, I cannot understand your extreme vote before although Hp-41 is also a good machine)

WHY ? Because ...

MORE SPEED: Hp42s is 10 times faster than the Hp-41cx

MORE FUNCTIONALITY: 64 kByte of ROM, the Hp-41cx has only 24 kByte of ROM (so do NOT come with the argument of plug-in ROMs ! Hp42s has already all important ROMs implemented !)

MORE RAM: 32 kByte are possible, with Hp-41cx only 6,5 kByte (including 2x XMemory!)

SMALLER FOOTPRINT: Although much better as described above, it is much smaller than Hp-41cx !

Edited: 12 Nov 2003, 12:01 p.m.

Re: Hp-42s is the BEST ever !!!

Message #8 Posted by [Dave](#) on 13 Nov 2003, 8:57 a.m.,
in response to message #7 by Ray F.Dutta

Excuse me, but what good is the increased memory capacity when one has to enter EVERYTHING by keystrokes and there is no way to backup programs????? Yes the 42S is nice, but it is severely crippled for real use due to this limitation.

Re: Hp-42s is the BEST ever !!!

Message #9 Posted by [Ray Dutta](#) on 13 Nov 2003, 9:55 a.m.,
in response to message #8 by Dave

Yeah, but the Hp-41 is VERY limited at other places!!

It is as slow crook ... !!! You can use it as calc but not really as programmable because technical calculations are too slow.

And ... What is 2200 Bytes ? And if you have XMem, the additional 4200 is only RAMDISK, so you cannot use it as real program space!!

The Hp-42s can be expanded to 32000 Bytes ... WOW!

...and the worst screen I've ever seen (no text)

*Message #10 Posted by **R Lion (España)** on 13 Nov 2003, 12:13 p.m.,
in response to message #7 by Ray F.Dutta*

Re: ...and the worst screen I've ever seen (no text)

*Message #11 Posted by **Ray** on 13 Nov 2003, 12:29 p.m.,
in response to message #10 by R Lion (España)*

Why is the screen the worst ??? I cannot understand ! Look at the ridiculous Hp-41 "screen", 12 digits with 14 segments :-))). That's much much worse then the great complex number double line display of the Hp-42s.

Ok, forget the graphing. But the rest is good compared to others...

Re: ...and the worst screen I've ever seen (no text)

*Message #12 Posted by **Nelson M. Sicuro (Brazil)** on 13 Nov 2003, 1:23 p.m.,
in response to message #11 by Ray*

The contrast and glare of the HP-42S display is terrible! (the old ones, at least. I have a HP-17BII that uses the same display, but its contrast is much better, the one with a stepped bezel). The capacity and resolution is fine.

For the best contrast ever, I vote for the HP-15C and second the HP-41CV.

Regards,

Nelson

Re: ...and the worst screen I've ever seen (no text)

Message #13 Posted by **R Lion (España)** on 13 Nov 2003, 6:10 p.m.,
in response to message #11 by Ray

Quote:

Why is the screen the worst ??? I cannot understand !

I said that because the contrast: if you adjust it for working on the table, you will see nothing with the calc in hands. But, in spite of it, I think is one of the best calcs in the world.

Re: ### Please vote: Which is YOUR FAVOURITE CALCULATOR ? ###

Message #14 Posted by **Arnaud Amiel** on 11 Nov 2003, 4:29 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Statistics

TI Little Professor as it is the calc that taught me how to count. My parents got me the LCD one but I was so jaleaous of people with the big LED one. So the big LED TI Little Professor as if you know how to count you don't need calcs so much.

Arnaud

HP 41

Message #15 Posted by **James-n-Tx** on 11 Nov 2003, 5:58 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Statistics

I agree with Dave on all counts. HP 41

James

an interesting variation...

Message #16 Posted by **hbanner** on 12 Nov 2003, 12:29 a.m.,
in response to message #1 by Statistics

You could ask what calculator would you take with you (and you can take only one) if you were in a scenario which required some sort of back-up computational device should your main computer go down, say being in an ocean crossing yaught or an orbiting space station. This puts the emphasis on functionality and reliability over aesthetics. Even though I find my personal choice to be as sexy as it is capable.

There can be only one ...

Re: an interesting variation...

Message #17 Posted by **Arnaud Amiel** on 12 Nov 2003, 3:23 a.m.,
in response to message #16 by hbanner

In that case it would have to be a slide rule as it has to be small enough not consume any power as I don't know how long I will be stranded and has to survive a nuclear blast. I don't see any hp or other fitting the bill.

Arnaud

Re: an interesting variation...

Message #18 Posted by **Stephan (Germany)** on 12 Nov 2003, 11:08 a.m.,
in response to message #17 by Arnaud Amiel

I agree. I'd take my Faber-Castell Novo Duplex. It's made of durable plastics, has all desirable functions on it and is large enough to be used as paddle, shovel and to defend yourself.

12345 to delete

Re: an interesting variation...

Message #19 Posted by **Raymond Del Tondo** on 12 Nov 2003, 2:02 p.m.,
in response to message #17 by Arnaud Amiel

In that case I'd definitely vote for a Curta, which is a masterpiece of a mechanical calculator, also uses no batteries, and last but not least, it's kinda RPN ;-)

Raymond

Re: an interesting variation...

Message #20 Posted by **Malcolm** on 12 Nov 2003, 4:51 p.m.,
in response to message #19 by Raymond Del Tondo

The Curta RULES.

As much as I like my 67 and the 34C the feeling of calculating on the Curta is just sweet.

It feels great looks great needs no batteries and...

you have to **think** to use it

Thanks Malcolm

Re: an interesting variation...

*Message #21 Posted by [Arnaud Amiel](#) on 13 Nov 2003, 8:31 a.m.,
in response to message #19 by Raymond Del Tondo*

I wish I had a Curta, they seem great but not easy to come by except on ebay where they are not cheap. However, I guess that however well built they are, they must be much easier to break than a slide rule and I guess it is much harder to calculate logs or trigs with them.

Arnaud

Re: an interesting variation...

*Message #22 Posted by [Trent Moseley](#) on 12 Nov 2003, 3:23 p.m.,
in response to message #16 by hbanner*

How about one of those old hand crank jobs. This is going back a stretch - I remember back in the late fifties or early sixties a salesman came to our office trying to sell a small device made in of all places Liechtenstein! You cranked it backwards to do division. It was small, say about 6 inches wide, 8 inches deep and the height of about 2 inches in front sloping to about 4 inches at the rear. I wonder who made it.

tm

Re: an interesting variation...

*Message #23 Posted by [Frank B. \(Germany\)](#) on 12 Nov 2003, 4:06 p.m.,
in response to message #22 by Trent Moseley*

A Curta? More expensive than HP calculators nowadays.

Frank.

Re: an interesting variation...

Message #24 Posted by [John Mosand](#) on 14 Nov 2003, 1:34 p.m.,

in response to message #23 by Frank B. (Germany)

Trent's description doesn't fit the Curta. Must be a different machine.

Re: ### My choice

*Message #25 Posted by **Mike (Stgt)** on 12 Nov 2003, 9:08 a.m.,
in response to message #1 by Statistics*

- 1) (a) HP-41C and it's successors (20/20 points), (b) HP200LX (20/20), alas successor missing (codenamed Garfield)
- 2) both fit exactly my needs at their time, the 200LX still today (and on the 200LX runs J-F Garniers emu41 <G>)

Ciao.....Mike

Re: ### Please vote: Which is YOUR FAVOURITE CALCULATOR ? ###

*Message #26 Posted by **Victor Koechli** on 12 Nov 2003, 11:10 a.m.,
in response to message #1 by Statistics*

Easy:

Favourite: 15C, because of everything.

Best ever: 48GX (overall), 49G (functionality). Probably 49G+ will surpass them both, but I haven't seen it yet. Prime criterium is functionality

Why #1 <> #2: See above.

Yet another 2 cents, Victor

Re: ### FAVORITE

*Message #27 Posted by **Frank** on 12 Nov 2003, 11:38 a.m.,
in response to message #1 by Statistics*

- 1) the best calculator ever built (your own subjective/personal opinion)

HP-48GX, because it does so much, feels so good, and has the best documentation and programming flexibility.

HP-32Sii, because of its very satisfying ergonomics.

HP-15C, because of it's incredible balance of size, power and simplicity.

2) your favorite calc

HP-16C

3) if not identical: Why is your favorite not the best calc ?

There's nothing else quite like a 16C, and for what it does there's nothing better, but it's not quite general-purpose.

Re: ### FAVORITE

*Message #28 Posted by **Norm** on 12 Nov 2003, 2:48 p.m.,
in response to message #27 by Frank*

Why the HP-34C of course. Because its the best, that's why!

HEY my buddy Ralph is over here, he says add his vote on also. He votes for HP-34C.

Oh, my girlfriend Linda, she says definitely HP-34C, add her vote too.

Wait, Ernie next door, he says be sure to tally another vote for HP-34C.

Oh and then Great-Aunt Edna just spoke up from her rocking chair, she says definitely HP-34C.

Be sure to count their votes also.

Re: ### Please vote: Which is YOUR FAVOURITE CALCULATOR ? ###

*Message #29 Posted by **Raymond Del Tondo** on 12 Nov 2003, 2:16 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Statistics*

1) HP-48GX of course, then HP-41 series

2) your favorite calc HP-48GX/G+ , then HP-41CX

Both of them are the best HP calcs regarding the user interface, programming capabilities, expanding, interfacing (ok, the 71B, too;-), documentation, and keyboard reliability & ergonomics .

My 2 Euro-Cents...

Raymond (HP calc user/programmer since ca. 1980)

My vote

Message #30 Posted by [R Lion \(España\)](#) on 12 Nov 2003, 3:55 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Statistics

The best calc ever made: 48GX & 15C

The first one if you need a "special", "sophisticated" calculator. The second one if you want a numeric scientific calculator.

Re: ### Please vote: Which is YOUR FAVOURITE CALCULATOR ?

Message #31 Posted by [Stefan Vorkoetter](#) on 12 Nov 2003, 4:48 p.m.,
in response to message #1 by Statistics

Best: Toss up between three: HP-41CX, HP-42S, and HP-34C.

Favorite: HP-34C. Why? I don't know, but I own one of each of the above (and a 32E and 19C as well), and the 34C is the one that I always use.

Re: ### Please vote: Which is YOUR FAVOURITE CALCULATOR ?

Message #32 Posted by [Ed Look](#) on 12 Nov 2003, 11:02 p.m.,
in response to message #31 by Stefan Vorkoetter

Stefan, to me, it's the ease of using it. Having had it for decades, I know every label on every button.

Also, despite the preferences of some for menus instead of extra shifted labels on keys, I think it is faster to make keystrokes using shifted label keys, as on that wondrous 34C. Too bad mine is, well, showing its age. For that reason, I use mainly the 32SII, which to me is a very similar calculator, one reason why I now love that one almost as much. I bought a 48G before the 32SII; when I finally got the 32SII, I was amazed at how "34C-like" it was!

INTERMEDIARY RESULT

Message #33 Posted by [Statistics](#) on 13 Nov 2003, 3:13 a.m.,
in response to message #1 by Statistics

Here is a first INTERMEDIARY RESULT:

BEST* calc ever:

1) HP-48GX (4)

1) HP-34C (4)

1) HP-41 series (4)

4) HP-15C (2)

4) HP-32SII (2)

4) HP-42S (2)

7) HP-49G/G+ (1)

7) HP-67 (1)

7) HP-65 (1)

7) HP-200LX (1)

7) HP-16C (1)

7) TI-Little Prof (1)

*) as most answered on "best calc ever" and not on "my favorite", I used this as listing criterion.

Edited: 13 Nov 2003, 3:42 a.m.

Best calc ever: HP-48GX

*Message #34 Posted by [HrastProgrammer](#) on 13 Nov 2003, 10:56 a.m.,
in response to message #1 by Statistics*

Then HP-71B, HP-42S and HP-41C/CV/CX ...

Re: Best calc ever: HP-71B

Message #35 Posted by **Veli-Pekka Nousiainen** on 13 Nov 2003, 1:55 p.m.,
in response to message #34 by HrastProgrammer

HP-71B is the best My favourite is hp 49g+ Why? I don't want to use too much of the 71B CALC mode, the bits are all ready falling off(-; # VPN #

THE TIMELESS HP-41 SYSTEM

Message #36 Posted by **Werner** on 14 Nov 2003, 2:02 a.m.,
in response to message #34 by HrastProgrammer

Dear "HP"(=HrastProgrammer),

yes, of course the HP-48GX is really an admirable machine! Nevertheless, I personally prefer the HP-41 as the No.1. Although it is an older machine based on more ancient technology, I do not think that it is less powerful than a HP-48GX.

So my question:

Is a HP-48GX still really more powerful than a tuned halfnut HP-41CX (using synth. programming and mcode – I know, also a HP48 can utilize such expanded ways of programming), if the following plug-in RAM's/ROM's/extensions are also completely or partly connected (or their ROM images have been loaded into an MLDL-RAM) ? :

Double-X-Memory-Module, bank-switched 16k-ZEPROM's, a RAMBOX/MLDL (e.g. W&W or Eramco or HP-41CY, etc. with 32k or 64k or 128k, e.g. with full soft-bank-switching access), HEPAX-Module, CCD-ROM, PPC-ROM, ZENROM, Sandbox-ROM, DAVID Assembler, Forth ROM, Advantage ROM, Wand, Card Reader, IL with periphery and advanced I/O processing like by the IL2000 solution from Christoph Klug.

In the near future the HP-41 System will hopefully be further extended by Meindert Kuiper's MLDL2000 including very large RAM space for ML+UL+Data+ROM-Images and USB PC interconnection. Internal use of 4-times bank-switching would lead to a huge address space especially if you take into account the high RAM efficiency of HP-41 program language.

With ML/MCode you can fully exploit the internal 13-digit accuracy and can define very fast macros, e.g. for fast large scale vector and matrix transforms or for a fast and convenient HP42S-like complex arithmetic implementation.

Further, the HP-41 System has to be seen in an environment of flanking great and fast emulators like EMU41, Warren Furlow's V*41, your HP-41E, which can run on a modern 3GHz notebook. In combination with Jean-Francois Garnier's extremely fast HP-IL emulator EMU41, real and virtual (emulated) IL/41 worlds are perfectly merged into one single domain with all available periphery and ROM resources. It further supports the HP-41 with a sort of ultra-fast "HP-41 Workstation/Docking-Station" that utilizes the same HP-41 language for software development (also perhaps with a nice assembler surface on a PC) and for high-complex or long-term calculations. Such a mixed calc-emu-environment is right according to the motto "hardware – software – it's all the same"

...

The benefit of such a calculator-workstation combination can be illustrated by the following example: E.g. use a real HP-41CX to key in the routines, further use it for data collecting and for full mobile use. And, e.g., use it for a coarse 10 parameter evaluation in, e.g., one minute runtime, then when you have found the parameter space of further interest use your fast emulator/"HP41 workstation" on your notebook-PC and do the same calculation with 20,000 detailed parameters also in one minute only (indeed, an EMU41 or a HP41E on a 3GHz machine is about 2000 times faster than a normal HP-41 !). The nice RPN program code can exactly be reused on the HP41 calculator and on the "HP41-workstation".

To conclude:

If you add all these great technical and highly efficiently designed supplements from a decade (1979-1990) of extremely dedicated enthusiasm from user groups like PPC and CCD and from professional third-party companies like VM Electronics, Zengrange, W&W, Eramco, CMT, and if you add great today's developments - like MLDL2000, IL2000, ROM hardware emulators, HP41 software emulators, the virtual IL loop from EMU41 - to the "Good-Old-HP-41", then I think that the HP-41 with its "clean", easy and flexible user interface and internal architecture is THE unbeatable system in the world of HP calculators.

I think that it cannot be beaten neither by a HP-48GX nor by a HP-49G/G+ although especially the HP-48GX with SysRPL and a lot more is really an admirable handheld computing device.

In my personal opinion, the HP-48GX is ranking directly after the HP-41-System as the No.2. HP-48GX has to share its place with the also great HP-71B-System being a superb IL controller and having also wonderful extensions (like Math, Forth, Assembler, etc.).

All other non-open calculators like HP-42S, HP-32*, HP-15C, HP-34C cannot be compared to the classes of open machines and full systems like HP-48, HP-49, HP-71, HP-75, and HP-41. This group is a class-of-its-own, the handheld computing class. It is separated from the class of pure calculators as is the HP-42S. The HP-42S for instance is of course a marvellous and complex machine, but it is "only" a calculator.

Best regards from Germany,

Werner

P.S.: BTW, please further support your HP-41E, not only your nice HP-41X, because the "E" is a great emulator, too. It is extremely fast on a modern notebook, you can do multi-run calculations with highest complexity in near zero time. Please implement a virtual IL loop as already done in EMU41. I think you already did some emulation of IL but as far as I know you have not yet implemented it in your HP-41E ?

Edited: 15 Nov 2003, 3:39 a.m. after one or more responses were posted

Re: THE TIMELESS HP-41 SYSTEM

*Message #37 Posted by [Ángel Martín](#) on 14 Nov 2003, 3:08 a.m.,
in response to message #36 by Werner*

Werner,

I just printed your message and hung it on the blackboard,. It is *phenomenal*, thanks for your super summary!

Best, ÁM.

PS. Ordered a wooden frame for it already! :-)

Re: THE TIMELESS HP-41 SYSTEM

*Message #38 Posted by **Werner** on 15 Nov 2003, 4:16 a.m.,
in response to message #37 by Ángel Martin*

Angel,

thank you very much for your kind words, I am pleased to hear that from you!

These remarks also refreshed the good feeling that I am not alone with my opinion, although it was already clear to me that there are many HP enthusiasts around who also think that the original technical design of the HP-41 and its further successive evolution over many years has set a standard for handhelds, even more if you look at it as a complete system.

HrastProgrammer, also thank you for your kind comments! Yes, I can understand you well that everyone has his own preferences, my preferences concerning the HP-41 are of course also characterized by the 1980's decade throughout which I was infected by the "41-virus". The reason for this "41-epidemic" was of course the birth of the new personal computing age (all young guys wanted to play with programmables) but - I believe - ALSO the "heavyweight" of the HP-41 technical design.

Thanks and best regards,

Werner

P.S.: Hrastprogrammer, do you intend to implement HP-IL to your HP-41E ?

Re: THE TIMELESS HP-41 SYSTEM

*Message #39 Posted by **HrastProgrammer** on 16 Nov 2003, 2:23 a.m.,
in response to message #38 by Werner*

Hrastprogrammer, do you intend to implement HP-IL to your HP-41E ?