

Apple iPod nano

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The new iPod nano is one of those situations where a picture just doesn't do it justice. Next to a pencil, side by side with the iPod Photo, or in the hand of some model just doesn't give the nano due credit. In person, in the palm of your hand, it's impossible to argue that this is Apple's finest creation since the iPod itself. Now let me try to put it into words.

Only 0.27 inches thick (3.5 by 1.6 inch footprint) and weighing a mere 1.5 ounces, the nano is nothing short of genius. The nano remains true to the iPod name with its click wheel navigation system and borrows from features found in the heftier iPod Photo. It is essentially a miniaturized iPod Photo. There's a color display (1.5 inches), photo syncing capability, and dock connector just like its relative.

The most notable tradeoff is the relatively limited storage compared to the hard drive versions. My music collection tops 10 GB and the nano's 2 GB (\$199) or 4 GB (\$249) versions won't provide enough storage. Add in photographs and 4 GB hardly seems sufficient. But do I really need my entire music collection with me all the time? I only listen to a few hundred songs on a regular basis and lots of storage is merely an excuse for my packrat tendencies.

With audio quality, the iPod Photo sounds more immersive compared to its pint-sized counterpart. The nano sounds good, but restrained and not as lively. Is the storage and audio quality a worthwhile tradeoff? For a mere \$50 more you can have better sound and five times the storage. But you'll have almost five times the weight and more than four times the bulk. I say the tradeoff is worth it. Portability and style go a long way and the nano oozes both. You'll be gaining much more than sacrificing by going nano instead of Photo. See it in person and I know you'll agree.