

LEXMARK

Lexmark E330
Lexmark E332n
Lexmark E332tn
27ppm



Sum-up: The Mercedes of personal/small-workgroup printers.

Lexmark's E-series printers are its entry-level models, but the level of entry keeps going up. A few years ago, a 25ppm printer was sold by Lexmark as a heavy-duty office workgroup printer. Now comes these models that are meant for either personal desktop use or for sharing by a few office mates, and it runs at 27ppm. Like the E232, these are very attractive-looking machines. With sleek black styling, compact size, and low noise levels, they are among the few printers on the market that could win design awards. And in many ways, they are similar to the E232. However, for the added price you get a nice upgrade in features.

The basic engine is the same as the E232's. There's a 200MHz processor and print resolution is 1,200dpi (600dpi on the E330). A 250-sheet paper tray and a single-sheet bypass (for nonstandard materials such as card stock and transparencies) can be supplemented with an optional 550-sheet paper drawer. That 550-sheet output drawer is standard on the E332tn. Output is limited to 150 sheets, with a single-sheet exit for the bypass.

USB connections are standard, and an external Ethernet server is optional on the E330, standard on the two E332 models. Wi-Fi connectivity is an option on all the models.

All three models start with 32MB of memory, expandable to 160MB. All offer PCL and PostScript standard. The duty cycle is rated at 15,000 pages per month.

These models have a lower cost per page than the E232. Our estimate, based on the lowest Lexmark prices, is around 2.2 cents, if you use the larger toner cartridge. This is not great, but typical for a personal/small workgroup printer.

In many ways, these personal/small workgroup printers are unique. It's not only their 27ppm speed, but their affordability as

well. Comparable printers like the 25ppm Samsung ML-2550 family and Brother HL-6050 family can claim a cost per page (1.5 cents for the Samsung models) and more total paper capacity (1,100 sheets for both), but they are both priced higher than the corresponding Lexmark models. The 25ppm Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 2300 family is significantly more expensive and has lower paper capacity, but at a slightly better price per page.

Be aware that this product family was recalled in 2004. Apparently, Lexmark discovered a shock risk that could occur if you (foolishly) plugged the three-pronged (grounded) plug into a two-pronged (ungrounded) socket. Lexmark was obliged to fix the problem with existing users just in case, and so it had a recall. Those currently on the market are deemed in compliance. There is no cause for concern at this point.

We applaud these stylish, speedy, and quiet machines. It's astonishing how the company has raised the bar on desktop printing. The E330/E332 models get our Editor's Choice Award.



Lexmark E330 — Sharp-looking and fast, this model makes a great personal printer.

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Lexmark T430
Lexmark T430d
Lexmark T430dn
32ppm



Sum-up: Capable mid-range printers, but with very limited output.

The T430 models are intended specifically for small workgroups. They are remarkably faster upgrades to the 22ppm T420 family, now discontinued.

The T430 models are a step up from the Lexmark E-series models in several ways. They are a little faster, printing at 32ppm. Part of this speed is due to a 366MHz processor. Memory on the all three models starts at 32MB and can be beefed up to 288MB. Lexmark claims a 65,000-pages-per-month maximum duty cycle for the machines.

Paper capacity starts at 350 sheets, with a 100-sheet bypass tray and a 250-sheet paper tray. There are two optional upgrades, 250-sheet and 500-sheet paper trays. You have to add the 250-sheet drawer first if you buy both. The maximum paper capacity is 1,100 sheets. Automatic duplexing is a standard feature on the T430d and T430dn models. It is not available for the T430. On the output side, there is a 20-sheet tray (for the bypass) and a 150-sheet tray.

Lexmark stresses this series' first-page printing speed, something that is important to many of their banking customers and others. We don't compare this feature (the actual speed depends on too many extraneous factors).

However, if you print many short jobs that you need at once, this might be a consideration.

This printer series has the usual standard Lexmark connectivity, meaning parallel and USB ports, with an optional serial connector. An external MarkNet Ethernet server is available for the T430 and T430d as an option; it's standard on the T430dn. A bar-code card is also available.

Cost per page is around 1.7 cents if you take the most efficient option (the high-capacity all-in-one cartridge with Lexmark's cartridge return program). That's higher than average in its segment.

These printers have a serious competitor—namely: HP's 30ppm LaserJet 2420 family. The T430dn, coming with duplexing and networking, costs \$50 less than the comparable LaserJet 2430dn. The HP model comes with a somewhat faster processor and more memory (64MB versus 32MB). The Lexmark model has more total paper capacity (1,100 sheets versus 850 sheets). Consumables prices are similar. On the whole, there is little to choose from between the two printers.

It's still pretty remarkable that a small-to-medium-workgroup printer series like this is available for between \$550 and \$850. If finishing is not a requirement and you have moderate throughput, this is a very good office machine, and we give it our Editor's Choice Award.

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