

= Zenbook =

Zenbook are a family of ultrabooks ? low @-@ bulk laptop computers ? produced by Asus . The first Zenbooks were released in October 2011 , and the original range of products was amended and expanded during 2012 . Models range from 12 @-@ inch laptops , featuring power efficient components but lacking connectivity and having only integrated graphics processors , to 15 @-@ inch laptops with discrete graphics processing units and optical disc drives . Most (though not all) Zenbooks use Intel Core ultra @-@ low @-@ voltage processors and Nvidia GPUs when integrated graphics are not used . Asus introduced new models with touch screens to take advantage of Windows 8 after its release in late 2012 . Most models drew comparisons to the Macbook Air . The most recent release in the Zenbook line is the upmarket Zenbook Infinity UX301 series .

Asus designed the Zenbooks with brushed aluminium chassis and high rigidity , rather than plastic , the usual laptop construction material . A pattern of concentric circles on the lids is said to represent ripples in water and represent the " zen philosophy " that designers wanted to portray when creating the laptops . Zenbooks have been generally well received due to their chassis design and appearance as well as the high quality screens used in later models . However , the touchpad software was found to be erratic , particularly on the early models and some of the models received criticism for their high prices . Some models (such as the UX32) suffer from lockdown when the lithium polymer battery cell gets drained or discharged below its recommended threshold , for example if the device is left on and unattended . The result is that the charger will fail to recharge the battery even when plugged in , leaving the machine in a near @-@ complete unresponsive off @-@ state . The machine can often be revived by pressing the power @-@ on key for 10 seconds , whereupon it will start recharging .

= = Design = =

In 2009 Asus released the UX50V , a 15 inch laptop that was focused on energy efficiency and had a thin profile . The laptop was rated poorly by reviewers as it under @-@ performed and had mediocre battery life , despite the installed energy efficient hardware . Although not branded as one , it bore the same " UX " product code as many of the later Zenbooks and was an early foray into the ultraportable market .

The Zenbook name was proposed by Asus chairman Jonney Shih to reflect the " zen philosophy " applied to the design . The chief designer , Loewy Chen , had wanted to incorporate design elements from luxury watches into his products for a long time . Zenbooks were the first opportunity to put this into practice , the crossover being achieved , he said , by " the unfolding of the laptop from the side recalling the elegance of minute and hour hand movements " . The reference to watches is also reflected in the marketing of Zenbooks ; Asus published design sketches overlaying an open Zenbook on a watch face , and video advertisements feature similar imagery . The concentric circles on the lid of Zenbooks were intended to look like ripples in water and to reflect " philosophical ideas such as the infinite nature of Zen thinking and self @-@ improvement " .

The bodies of the Zenbooks are made of aluminium , chosen for its light weight , strength , vibration dampening , appearance and acoustic properties . Both the bodies and lids are CNC milled and brushed for appearance . Reviewers have noted the resulting superior rigidity and complimented the appearance of the Zenbook range . The lid is available in three colours : dark silver / purple (pictured) , rose gold and hot pink .

To preserve space , Zenbooks use two PCBs connected by a communications ribbon so it can have ports on both sides of the device , with a heatsink and fan centred between them .

= = Product range = =

= = = First generation = = =

The first generation of Zenbooks was announced on October 11 , 2011 , one day before release , although they were first demonstrated at Computex 2011 in May that year . Two models were released in 2011 to positive reviews : the 11 inch UX21E and the 13 inch UX31E , also frequently known as the UX21 and UX31 respectively . The design of the UX21 drew comparisons to the Macbook Air and it was regarded as an " excellent rival " by CNET reviewer Andrew Hoyle . Other aspects of the laptops that reviewers liked were the Bang and Olufsen speakers , fast boot times due to Asus ' BIOS design and the speed of general tasks within the operating system resulting from the SSD and Sandy Bridge processors . However , the screens drew criticism for their poor contrast ratio , colour accuracy and less than perfect viewing angle , although they were praised for their brightness and the sharpness of the UX31 's screen . Reviewers also noted the shallow key @-@ press of the metal keyboard and lack of backlighting , a feature that Asus did not have time to implement before shipping .

== Zenbook Prime ==

In April 2012 Asus revealed a revision of the two original Zenbooks , this time based on the Ivy Bridge microarchitecture . The model numbers were UX21A and UX31A for the 11 and 13 inch models respectively but are more frequently referred to as Zenbook Primes . Changes made to the original included the aforementioned update to Ivy Bridge processors and the introduction of the corresponding HM76 chipset bringing native USB 3 @. @ 0 , 1920 × 1080 IPS displays for both models , an Intel Centrino Wi @-@ Fi controller , an improved trackpad and new plastic keyboard with backlighting . The new screens were highly praised by reviewers when considering brightness , contrast ratio , viewing angle and colour accuracy , the improvements over previous models being put down to the switch from TN to IPS displays . The UX21A has contrast ratio of 939 and the UX31A achieved 1085 , giving it the highest resolution and contrast ratio of any ultrabook at the time of release . The improved keyboard also garnered praise for the increased backlighting and improved key travel while the Intel Wi @-@ Fi controller was found to perform better than the Qualcomm used in the first generation of Zenbooks . The Zenbook Primes still received some criticism : the latest version of the trackpad was acknowledged as an improvement over the original Zenbooks , but still irritating , and the sound quality was found to be worse than that with the first generation . Despite these issues , the overall reaction was positive : the UX31A was called " today 's best ultrabook " and " the best ultrabook out there " at the time of release .

== UX32 series ==

As early as March 2012 , information was leaked hinting at a new series of Zenbooks and in early May Asus revealed the UX32 series , followed by their release on May 21 . Two models were announced : the UX32A and the UX32VD , both including a thicker chassis to accommodate a 500 GB / 24 GB flash hybrid drive and in the UX32VD an Nvidia Geforce GT 620M . The UX32A was designed to be a cheaper Zenbook with a previous generation Sandy Bridge processor option , lower resolution screen and hybrid drive .

The UX32VD was well received for similar reasons to the Zenbook Prime . The screen , chassis and keyboard again garnered praise although the inclusion of a discrete GPU was noted as a major selling point . The hybrid drive attracted criticism for its slow performance and the same trackpad issues that the Zenbook Prime had were still present . The UX32 models have a 4 % smaller battery than the Zenbook Prime and the discrete GPU of the UX32VD consumes more power than the integrated GPUs of other Zenbooks ; and the shorter battery life was also a detraction . SLR Lounge criticised the slow hybrid drive and 4 GB of RAM , but suggested replacing them as the option is available , noting that it was an option not often offered on ultrabooks .

As a cheaper option the UX32A was praised by Chris Martin of PC Advisor for being " a more affordable luxury " , retaining the " premium feel " of the Zenbook range but at a lower price point . The aluminium chassis , which is identical to the UX32VD to keep costs down , was widely acclaimed for its strength and build quality . By contrast , the Sandy Bridge chip , a previous @-@

generation part at the time of sale , was outlined as a detraction as was the lower battery life compared to the UX31E . Although the screen used was a TN panel and of a lower resolution than the UX32VD or UX31A , it was considered an acceptable compromise for the price . The screen has a matte finish and relatively high brightness which Notebook Check 's reviewer , Christian Hepp , found " quite suitable for outdoor use " , noting that it had a good contrast ratio but a narrow range of colours .

== 14 and 15 inch Zenbooks ==

On October 23 , 2012 , Asus hosted a launch event for Windows 8 , where it revealed UX42VS and UX52VS models to be released in November . The UX42VS is a 14 inch ultrabook and the UX52VS is a 15 inch laptop , which may qualify as an ultrabook depending on the options chosen . The UX42VS is available with an Intel Core i3 , i5 or i7 processor with up to 6 GB of RAM . In total , it weighs approximately 1 @. 9 kg (4 @. 2 lb) .

The UX52VS has the option of Intel 's ultra @- low voltage i5 or i7 mobile processors , up to 10 GB of RAM and an optical disc drive . The latter is a first for the Zenbook product series . It drew criticism for its high price and lack of touch screen , but the screen quality , keyboard and system speed were praised . The battery life was considered acceptable taking into account the form @- factor and the discrete GPU , despite it being significantly shorter than the UX31A .

== Zenbook Touch ==

First displayed in June 2012 at Computex , the Zenbook Touch series has touch screens to take advantage of the Windows 8 operating system . The Zenbook Touch series includes the UX31A which is the same as the Zenbook Prime , but with a touch enabled screen , and the U500VZ , a 15 inch model . A UX21A with a touch enabled screen was also demonstrated at Computex in June and officially announced in late August , though at the launch event on October 23 , 2012 , only the UX31A and the U500VZ were displayed . The U500VZ is thicker than previous Zenbooks at 20 mm (0 @. 79 ") and uses a standard Ivy Bridge mobile processor rather than the ultra @- low voltage CPUs used in other Zenbooks , thus technically pushing it out of the ultrabook category , although it still meets other ultrabook specifications . AnandTech reviewer Jason Inofuentes found the touch screen to be so superior to the trackpad that he stopped using the trackpad altogether in his trial of a Zenbook Touch at the Asus launch event . Chris Griffith of The Australian found that the screen of the UX31A responded well and that the Windows 8 gestures worked predictably , his only criticism being the high price .

== Zenbook Infinity ==

First displayed at Computex in 2013 , the Zenbook Infinity has a Gorilla Glass body ; a mobile Haswell CPU (i5 or i7) ; at least 8GB of RAM ; and a 13 @. 3 @- inch touchscreen with a maximum resolution of 2560x1440 . In place of the single SSD used in previous Zenbook are two SSDs in a RAID 0 configuration .

== Zenbook UX303 ==

== Zenbook UX305 ==

== Specifications ==