

Title:

Plasma Tv's The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly

Word Count:

733

Summary:

Plasma televisions are the newest improvement in television viewing.

Keywords:

Plasma television

Article Body:

Plasma televisions have come a long way since they first appeared about a decade ago and they have become the newest must-have home appliance there is on the market. They're flat, hip and offer stunning images unlike anything we've seen on older television models before. Plasma televisions do seem to have it all, but are they the answer to all our home entertainment prayers or just a trend? Unfortunately, plasma televisions have a few disadvantages.

The cost

This is the number one consideration for many videophiles and plasma televisions are not cheap at all. When they first came out in the 90s, the price tag for plasma television sets showed a whopping \$10000. That forms a part of a regular home mortgage and enough to have consumers running in the opposite direction.

These days, though, the price has calmed down thanks to better production practices and the magic of demand. In fact, a good-sized brand-name plasma TV costs at least \$2500. That's still the price of about three regular TVs with a few video CDs thrown in. Compared to its nearest rival, the LCD TV, plasma televisions, one of its disadvantages, still cost more.

But with the price comes quality. Nowhere else can you find the kind of high-definition viewing pleasure that plasma televisions can offer. If their price is a disadvantage, they more than make up for it with their quality. Besides, for a genuine videophile, plasma televisions have a short return on investment and they will more than make up for their price in a few years. If you think of that, that's not really a disadvantage of having a plasma television now, is it?

Life span

Plasma televisions had a notorious reputation for conking out after a given set of viewing hours.

In 2004, plasma televisions offered a disadvantageous 20,000 hours of viewing pleasure. Compare that to an LCD TV's 50,000 hours.

These days, however, plasma televisions have improved and been given longer life spans. Depending on the brand, plasma TVs have a half-life of 60,000 hours. If you're a normal person with a normal family having normal TV viewing hours, that should not be considered a disadvantage. Imagine this: if you spend at least 5 hours in front of your plasma TV, that will translate to about 33 years of use.

The viewing hours do not indicate an expiry date for your plasma television. The number of hours refers to the plasma TV's half-life, or the time when your TV screen burns at half of its original brightness.

Burn in issues

This is another disadvantage of plasma televisions. Plasma TVs are called that way thanks to the thousands of minute fluorescent lights in the screen. These lights are filled with gas which burn each time the TV is used. This is a good thing, because compared to the LCD and the older CRT TVs, a plasma TV need only light up when they're needed. LCD panels are like one big light bulb that is always turned on.

With regular TV use, that's really not a problem. The disadvantage appears when you display a static image on screen. What's a static image? If you're an HBO fan and you have your plasma television turned on to HBO for hours on end, pretty soon you'll notice a faint HBO logo on your screen even when you're turned on to ESPN or another channel.

That is also an issue if you're a heavy video game user. If you hook up your video game console to your plasma TV and play all day for days upon days, the hours of playing will burn in the image of, say, the life meter on your plasma screen. That will be a little embarrassing especially if you're having friends over and they'll see a shadowy image of your otherworldly pursuits right in front of their eyes.

But then again, the risk of burn-in only becomes a real threat and disadvantage if you use the plasma TV full blast. You can always cheat by reducing the TV's contrast to just 50%.

With every new technology, there are always good points and bad and plasma

televisions are not free from these issues. In the game of 'who's-the-better-tv', there really is no one clear winner. If you choose a plasma television, then it's only because you like what you see, you can afford it and you can handle the disadvantages of a plasma television while enjoying the advantages.