

TEST BENCH



HARDWARE / SOFTWARE / COMPONENTS

HD cam on the cheap

The *PC User* team tests the latest hardware and software, including Kogan's surprisingly decent budget 1080p camcorder.

KOGAN FULL HD 1080P TOUCHSCREEN VIDEO CAMERA

PRICE \$329 PLUS DELIVERY / **CONTACT** KOGAN
PHONE (03) 8677 2272 / **WEB** www.kogan.com.au

Kogan's first stab at a budget 1080p-capable camcorder was rife with caveats, concessions and suffered from a cheaply built camera body. Ultimately, it wasn't a great option beyond the fact that it was undeniably cheap. The second camcorder Kogan has brought to market is an improvement in just about every respect. Gone is the really cheap build quality for a start. It's still not the most robust camera, but the plastic doesn't squeak when you open the LCD and the buttons have solid weight. If you don't like buttons, it's also touchscreen capable. The one bit of plastic on the camcorder we didn't like is the lens cap, which is rather flimsy and often hard to correctly place. The camcorder uses a simple touchscreen- or button-activated menu layout. That's both good and bad. While it makes it easy to use the camera, it also means it's lacking in some of the precise controls you'd find on higher-priced camcorders. While it's 1080p capable, you're limited to only 30 frames per second (fps) in full HD — if you want 60fps, you'll have to drop down to 720p quality. Zoom is an average 5x optical (or 10x digital) affair, with



relatively smooth motion, and an 8GB SDHC card is provided for storage purposes. Shooting video was a mostly pleasant experience. If you're expecting excellent quality, you unsurprisingly won't get it; however, that shouldn't come as a shock at this price point. In full HD mode, which captures to H.264 format .mov files only, we hit some instances of pixelation and motion blur while shooting, and like many camcorders, it's not very good with still image capture. The camcorder's touchscreen might be a good selling point, but it's not

particularly good, as we often had to jab multiple times, generally at the base of the screen, in order to get commands recognised. Thankfully, the button controls work quite well. There's no doubt that you're taking concessions in return for a cheap asking price, but if your needs and expectations are as modest as your budget, the returns from this Kogan 1080p camcorder are solid enough.

— Alex Kidman
PC User says: This is an inexpensive yet surprisingly good camcorder.