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rugged laptop

# Getac V100 Tablet

A tough little customer that will take anything you throw at it

If there's one thing you shouldn't do with a brand new laptop, it's take it down to the beach, roll it around in the sand and drop it into a rocky pool. While such a day trip would spell the end for most laptops, some, like the Getac V100 Tablet, are made of sturdier stuff

Indeed, pull the V100 from its surprisingly small box and the first thing you'll notice is its beefy frame. If there was ever a laptop destined for use on a battlefield, then we're sure it'd look something like the Getac. The lid catch in particular looks like it'd be more at home securing an ammunition case than a laptop. Every corner and edge is cushioned by shock-absorbing plastic, and all its ports are hidden by rubber sealed flaps, which promise to keep water, dust and any other particles from intruding upon the delicate components inside.

While you'd expect all this sturdiness to come at the expense of portability, the V100 is surprisingly light, tipping the scales at just 2.2kg. The use of magnesium alloy throughout the case is largely responsible for the combination of extreme strength and sensible weight. While this isn't the lightest laptop we've seen, the Getac is happy to be transported without needing a well-padded laptop bag to keep it safe. Clip the supplied handle to the metal clips at either side of the laptop's front edge, and the only thing you'll have to worry about is accidentally kneecapping yourself with one of the V100's incredibly solid corners.

After spending time with the likes of HP's gorgeous 2710p Tablet PC (issue 11), there's no question that the Getac

looks a bit of a bruiser. In use though, that couldn't be further from the truth. It's common for petite laptops to provide unpleasantly cramped keyboards, but in keeping with its utilitarian credentials,



1 The Getac might not be completely submersible, but as long as you don't dunk it in the bath, it will work in the worst conditions. We poured mugs of water all over it with no effect.

2 In addition to a carry handle, Getac provides an elasticated hand strap for when you're using it in Tablet mode. Thanks to its relatively light weight, it's easily portable too.

3 The Getac's array of ports are all hidden behind rubber-sealed plastic ports. Thankfully, they're all labelled, so you won't have to open them all one by one to find the port you need.

the Getac makes no such compromise. Granted, items such as the half-height Enter key and shrunken Shift, Tab and Ctrl keys take a little getting used to, but the full-sized Qwerty keys make up for this. The keys are comfy to type upon thanks to a crisp, positive action and only a mild sponginess counts against them. Similar praise can be heaped upon the trackpad, which is responsive and blessed with buttons that respond with a crisp click.

With no vents to keep the processor cool it's little surprise that the Getac gets a little toasty in use. But, while a high-powered processor would turn the V100 into an unwieldy hot potato, Intel's low-voltage Core Duo U2500 keeps temperatures to a manageable level, while still offering enough power for most tasks. It might only operate at a modest 1.2GHz, but with two processor cores beaver away, the V100 always felt snappy in use.

Cast an eye over the 10.4" display and the first thing you'll notice is that it's eye-poppingly bright — so much so that we had to reduce the screen brightness even under the glare of office lighting.

Our model also came with an optional transfective display — a technology that keeps the image viewable under the brightest of conditions. Even with the backlight turned off, it was possible to faintly make out the Windows Desktop, allowing you to dim the backlight right down to conserve battery power without compromising readability. The V100's display is also a touchscreen, so you can navigate windows with the tethered telescopic stylus or a finger.

As with all ruggedised laptops, the Getac is expensive. The basic specification starts at £1,791 exc VAT, but once you start adding GPS (a £65 option), HSDPA (another £270) and push the RAM up to more sensible amounts such as 1Gb or 2Gb, you're looking a price tag that'd easily buy you three much better specified, albeit not as rugged, laptops. But as ever, the question is one of need. If you work in dusty or damp environments, then the average laptop's life expectancy will hang precariously in the balance. The Getac, on the other hand, will take a battering and come back for more. ●

**£2,408** INC VAT

www.steatite.co.uk

**OVERALL** ●●●●●

Good: resilience, weight, keyboard, screen

Bad: Very expensive; looks

