

BUYER'S **guide**

Graphing Calculators

With the proliferation of cell phones, MP3 players, PDAs, GPS units, and gadgets that combine the functions of all these devices, the venerable graphing calculator might seem to be a relic of the past. However, upgrades to classic models as well as a new generation of dedicated graphing calculators ensure that these reliable devices will continue to have a place in mathematics, science, and business classrooms.

Graphing calculators in general refer to those calculators capable of plotting graphs on their screens, solving simultaneous equations, and performing other calculations with multiple variables. This class of calculator is also programmable, allowing users to create programs to solve complex equations or to download and install prewritten programs available online.

Many current graphing calculators also feature computer algebra systems. A CAS is a program that facilitates symbolic mathematics by allowing students to perform routine algebraic tasks symbolically rather than numerically.

Contemporary graphing calculators contain USB ports as well as serial ports for connecting to other calculators or computers. Several models have slots to insert secure digital cards for data transfer and memory upgrades. Additional hardware allows teachers to project the graphing calculator's screen onto a large monitor or overhead projector for demonstrations or group projects.

Graphing calculators are permitted—or even required—on many standardized tests and college entrance exams. As manufacturers improve calculator processing speeds, memory, and upgradability, the devices will improve student ability to visualize, understand, and excel in mathematics and science.

Manufacturer	Model	Price	Size/Weight
Casio http://www.casio.com	Classpad 330	\$149.99	7.46" × 3.3" × .83" 9.9 oz.
	FX9860G SD	\$79.99	7.26" × 3.64" × .94" 9.35 oz.
	FX9860G-Slim	\$99.99	3.5" × 4.75" × .875" 7.1 oz.
Hewlett Packard http://www.hp.com	HP 49G+	\$175.99	7.2" × 3.4" × .9" 7.7 oz.
	HP 50G	\$149.99	7.2" × 3.5" × .98" 8.8 oz.
Sharp http://www.sharp.com	EL-9900C	\$89.99	7.2" × 3.4" × .9" 8.5 oz.
Texas Instruments http://www.ti.com	TI-84+ Silver	\$128.99	**
	TI-89 Titanium	\$189.99	**
	TI Nspire CAS	\$179.99	7.81" × 3.94" × 1.13" 10.24 oz.

**Information not available at press time.

Batteries	Display Size (pixels)	Memory	Programs & Applications	Connectivity	Notes
4 AAA	160 × 240 touchscreen	4 MB flash ROM, 500 KB RAM	CAS, 3D graphing, eActivities, geometry, statistics, conics preloaded	USB, serial	
4 AAA	64 × 128	1.5 MB flash ROM, 64 KB RAM	eActivities, spreadsheet, conics	USB, serial	SD card slot
2 AAA	64 × 128	1.5 MB flash ROM, 64 KB RAM	eActivities, electronic upgradability	USB, serial	
3 AAA + 1 CR2032	80 × 131	2 MB flash ROM, 512 KB RAM	CAS, 3D graphing, 2,300 functions, electronic upgradability	USB, infrared, serial	SD card slot
4 AAA + 1 CR2032	80 × 131	2 MB flash ROM, 512 KB RAM	CAS, 3D graphing, 2,300 functions, electronic upgradability	USB, infrared, serial	SD card slot
4 AAA + 1 CR2032	64 × 132	64 KB RAM	99 programs installed, other programs available from Sharp Web site	USB, serial	Reversible keypad
4 AAA + 1 SR44SW	64 × 98	1.5 MB flash ROM, 24 KB RAM	SAT prep questions, periodic table preloaded. Applications available from TI or other developers	USB, serial	Customizable faceplate and cover colors (online only)
4 AAA + 1 SR44SW	100 × 160	2.7 MB flash ROM, 188 KB RAM	CAS, 3D graphing, electronic upgradability. Applications available from TI or other developers	USB, serial	
4 AAA	320 × 240, 115 DPI, 16-level grayscale	20 MB storage memory, 16 MB RAM	CAS, “grab and move” graphing, spreadsheet. Applications available from TI or other developers	USB, serial	Comes with interchangeable TI 84+ keypad