



# EPSON Perfection V700 Photo Scanner

Mark Webster gets out his old slide collection, dusts it off and creates superb digital images

Epson's latest top transparency/reflective scanner has a dual lens system. The lens in the lid is for transparencies scans up to 6400dpi, while the one in the bed is for reflective work up to 4800dpi. A registerable optical density of 4.0Dmax means a huge range of tones can be captured, including great detail in the shadow end. Four height-adjustable transparency film holders mean all manner of transparencies can be handled from 35mm on up.

It's no beauty, but this is hardly an accessory for the stylish design pad. The V700 is a large (50cm long, 30cm wide and 15cm deep) silver and black rectangular unit for professionals. The included Epson Scan software defaults into a Full Auto Mode that would not be used by anyone buying this scanner for pro applications – it blats off a scan and quits, dealing with the image totally automatically. With a standard photo, it does a good job, but Home Mode and Professional Mode are much more comprehensive options.

Business users might be happy with Home Mode when scanning a lot of similar images, but Pro is the favourite. This full-featured mode gives you configurable Unsharp Mask and Descreening, Dust Removal and access to ICE (a hardware scratch and defect improvement routine), plus Colour Restoration. You can choose resolutions up to 48-bit colour for full gamut scans, Preview in full or thumbnail size, set original media types (negative, positive, reflective, etc), set size of final scan and more, plus adjust white point, contrast, tonal histograms and colours all to your heart's content. Then save a preset for re-use – a boon for those repetitive scan jobs involving lots of similar originals.

A full-size preview of a photographic print finishes in 8-10 seconds; the final scan in well under two minutes and it's faster still if the scanner is warmed up (when doing several scans in succession).

ICE doesn't magically fix everything, but it doesn't fudge details either, while dealing effectively with small flecks and dots. If your originals are in good order, leave ICE off for big speed gains.

SilverFast scan software is also included for those who really know their pre-press. From my quick glance, Epson's Creativity Suite appears to replicate iPhoto and can be bypassed.

The true test of a scanner is how it handles transparencies. V700 transparency scan results are warm, rich, vibrant, saturated and detailed. I zoomed in very close in Photoshop with one result and congratulated myself on finding flaws – until I realised I was looking at the actual photographic grain in 400ASA film stock, perfectly rendered!

I tried black-and-white 35mm negatives and larger colour transparencies. Everything was handled with aplomb, although with Photoshop open at the same time (1.25GB RAM, dual-processor 1.8GHz G5 tower) it was a bit of a resource hog.

Preview creates thumbnails you just check or uncheck. Press the final Scan button and all checked thumbnails are scanned one after the other – 12 transparency scans all at 6400dpi, scanned 1:1, took about 25 minutes.

Resulting scans were, of course, 35mm x 21mm, but in the Image Size dialogue in Photoshop, changing Resolution to 300dpi with Resample Image unchecked yielded

brilliant images at 75cm x 45.5cm at a good enough quality to grace glossy magazines. There's no arguing with results like that.

The V700 scanner will happily look after full-gloss press reproduction, or work magic for an archiving photographer. If you just want a scanner for internet use, go for something cheaper. But, if quality is everything and you want one unit for film and transparency jobs, get this one.

## EPSON V700 PHOTO

RRP\$999

**DESCRIPTION** Prosumer flatbed dual 4800dpi reflective/6400dpi transparency scanner

**SYSTEM** FireWire/USB2 interfaces, 48-bit colour depth, 16-bit grey, 8216 x 297mm scan area with white-cold cathode fluoro lamp. Included software: Epson Scan, Epson Creativity Suite, SilverFast SE6, Adobe Photoshop Elements 3, ABBYY Finereader Sprint 6 (Windows)/Sprint 5 (Mac), Newsoft Presto Biz 4 LE and Online User Guide

**+** Fast with superb quality  
Handles everything  
Good software

**-** It's an imposing block  
Fiddly transparency holders

Aesthetics	7/10
New features	9/10
Stability	10/10
Value for money	9/10
<b>Overall</b>	<b>9/10</b>

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