

## [ FIRST LOOKS ]

## Epson Stylus Photo 870

PHOTO PRINTER

It's only logical: when you print digital photos, you want results that look, feel and last as if they came from a photo lab. Two new photo printers — Epson's \$799 Stylus Photo 870 and Sony's \$680 (ex tax) UP-DP10 — come as close as any that I've seen to achieving this goal. I tested shipping units equipped with pre-production drivers.

At first glance, the Stylus Photo 870 behaves like a typical inkjet. It prints black text and colour graphics on plain paper, and has both USB and parallel ports. This device really struts its stuff when you print your photos on Epson's special paper. The resulting images are gorgeous, with accurate, subtle colours and a continuous-tone look belying their inkjet origins. Although most inkjet photos are notoriously prone to fading, Epson says prints on its new paper will last as long as traditional silver halide photos.

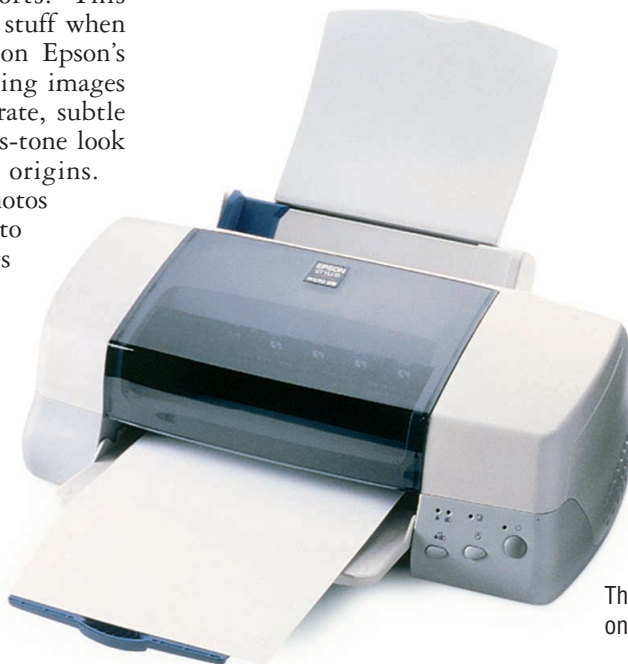
In my tests using a USB connection, the Stylus Photo 870 printed an 8x10in photo in about four minutes; 4x6in snapshots took around 90 seconds apiece. A 4x6in print costs about \$1.70 for special paper and ink. My one big gripe: Epson's roll paper, which you can use to print edge-to-edge snapshots, is cumber-

some to handle. You have to cut strips of photos apart manually. And as with previous Epson photo printers, black text prints on plain paper a tad fuzzily. Even so, this versatile printer is a find for serious digital shutterbugs. (A wide-format version, the \$1099 Stylus Photo 1270, prints at sizes up to 13x44in.) ■

— Harry McCracken

**Epson Stylus Photo 870****Price:** \$799 (incl. tax)**Phone:** (02) 9903 9000**URL:** [www.epson.com.au](http://www.epson.com.au)

## in brief



The Stylus Photo 870 can print on photo or plain paper.