

HDMI cables



QED Qunex HDMI SR

Length: 1m £80

The bright silver design of this cable from QED makes a change from the usual matte offerings, though it could be distracting. Still, it's easy to fit and fairly flexible compared with some of the others here. The plugs are heavy duty and the cable sat firmly in place on back of our Samsung TV. As with the Ixos, the QED lead is triple-screened, and the wires are in twisted pairs to help further reduce interference. It's fully compliant to the HDMI 1.2a specification, and the connectors are gold-plated for better conductivity and resistance to corrosion. Despite the construction, however, overall picture quality just didn't appear as well-defined as with the other digital cables here. While colours were bold with no visible bleeding, our test fight scene in *Revenge of the Sith* was grainy when there was lots of movement. A good effort but there are better options.

Contact 01279 501111

Web www.qed.co.uk

Overall ★★★



Ixos XHT658

Length: 1m £88

Compared with most other video interconnects, HDMI cables are smaller and easier to fit. However, the connectors are thinner and more care must be taken not to put any stress on the plug. It can sometimes be difficult to keep heavier leads in place. The Ixos XHT658 is fairly heavy but seemed well-seated once it was in place. That said, it's hard to bend, which could prove a problem in confined areas. Ixos has applied triple shielding to counteract electromagnetic interference, and the lead boasts the same nitrogen-injected insulation and silver-plated conductors of the company's component cables and is fully specified to carry HD signals up to 1080p. The image produced proved notably lighter than with its rivals. Fine detail was clearly resolved but some areas took on a more grainy texture. At £88 it's not cheap, but this is a well-constructed cable.

Contact 0870 345 9980

Web www.ixos.co.uk

Overall ★★★

**True Colours Industries
Copperhead HDMI**

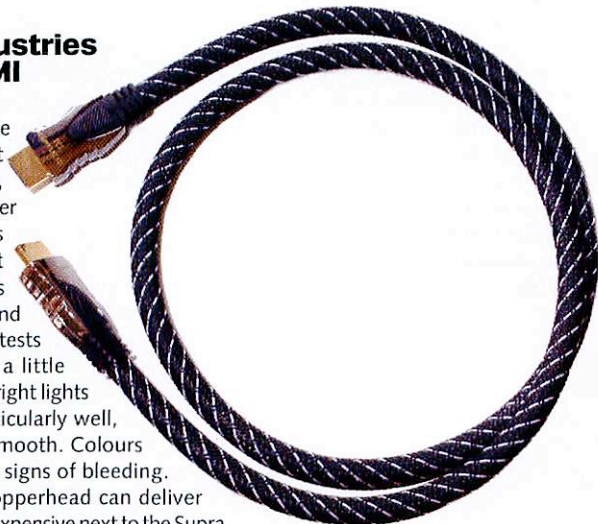
Length: 1m £100

The Copperhead HDMI cable certainly boasts the weight to match its price. However, it does make the cable harder to route. True Industries is also keen to point out that this 3rd generation design is fully HDMI 1.2 compliant and supports 1080p signals. In tests images looked sharp but a little grainy. The cable handled bright lights on a dark background particularly well, though, and motion was smooth. Colours were bold with no obvious signs of bleeding. There's no denying the Copperhead can deliver excellent images but it looks expensive next to the Supra.

Contact 028 9267 3024

Web www.true-colours.com

Overall ★★★



Supra HF100

Length: 1m £50

Supra's cable is quite a bit lighter than the Ixos, and its flexibility made it easy to work with. The cable is double-shielded with an aluminium foil and copper braid to help avoid electrical interference, and comes with gold plating on the connectors to ensure a good contact. In use, the Supra's picture proved darker and slightly warmer than with the other HDMI cables. That said, bright colours were reproduced without affecting the dark areas surrounding them, colour was spot-on and fine detail present but not artificially sharp. There was very little noise, even on still pictures, and fast scenes felt easier to follow than with other cables. It's hard to explain but images were definitely more 'comfortable'. Given that it's also the cheapest of the HDMI cables here, the Supra quickly became our favourite. Longer cables can be ordered at a cost of £10 per metre.

Contact 01223 441299

Web www.supracables.co.uk

Overall ★★★

Robert Follis Associates
Active Home - Feb 2007

How we tested

Testing leads for consumer electronics will always involve a certain amount of subjective opinion, though we did our utmost to keep this to a minimum. To help with this we compared the group using two identical setups comprising a Denon DVD-1920 DVD player and Samsung LE32R73BD television. This allowed us not only to compare cables on a typical system but also side by side.

For our main tests we used scenes from *Star Wars III: Revenge of the Sith* on DVD for the comparisons, including 'Battle over Corescent', which features both very dark and very bright areas, and the colourful, fast-paced battle between Obi-Wan and General Greivous. Each scene was watched several times using A-B Repeat to assess the quality of the picture.