

# BlackBerry playbook review

## Alan Turner, Leicestershire Dyslexia Association.

Since writing this, Alan adds: I can't seem to find any Text to Speech (TTS) as yet for the playbook but there are many good maths programs, and I am looking into English programs. I would also like to say that **Evernote** has been an invaluable program (I have it on 5 items). I will keep looking into programs as I love the playbook and take it with me where ever I go.

**A B.D.A. Tech reader called Bob**, is very disappointed that the Blackberry playbook has no text to speech facility. Dyslexic readers do not all need TTS, and Alan, for example, appreciates the options for visual preferences, but we agree with Bob that we would like all devices to have the option of TTS

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I was looking at getting a portable tablet pc but not been a fan of iPads (purely because of iTunes) so it left my choices short. I am a big fan of Blackberry and know their products well, so naturally I bought myself a playbook. I decided to write this review on the tablet to test the word processor.



I will start by looking at the unit. First impressions of the playbook is that it is a smart simple unit. The outer case has a slight rubbery feel to it which makes is nice to hold. It has stereo speakers on the front left and right which offer good sound quality. Also the unit offers a stereo microphone. The quality of the front and rear cameras are complimented by a screen that offers 1080p video quality. All this put together makes a brilliant unit. It also comes with a 1GB dual core processor and a 1GB of ram. It is brilliant at multi-tasking, so you could be

recording video/audio while using the word processor and searching the internet. All this and the battery life gives you a fantastic 10 hours of continual use.

The firmware that the playbook comes with is easy to use and has a good start up program for first time users. The playbook links up to Blackberry phones easily via Bluetooth to share the Internet, notes and calendar (I am not sure about iPhones and android phones). The touch screen exceeds my expectations and proves easy to get on with. The keyboard is well spaced and comes with predictive text. I would say that's about 75% accurate with its recommendations for my spelling. There is also a built in auto-correct system which works on common errors. One of the biggest problems with Blackberry is the App world. Thankfully RIM (Research in Motion) have looked into this. The blackberry has an Android emulator which works automatically with android apps, but not all android apps work so they are not on the app world. The word processor that comes with the playbook is brilliant. The education apps on the playbook are based for all school ages but mostly young children. There are still many other apps that will help people of all ages including adults.

I hope to review programs for the playbook at a later date.

### **Good points**

- Comfortable hold.
- Brilliant sound recording quality and output.
- Crystal Clear screen.
- Easy setup and use.
- Easy multi-tasking.
- Great battery life (10 hours of use).
- Internet is compatible with flash.

### **Bad points**

- Bit heavier than iPad.
- App world adequate but not as thorough as iPad.
- No built in mobile antenna (done through separate mobile via Bluetooth).

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