

TP-Link Archer C7 (AC1750) Review: Excellent Cheap Dual Band Gigabit Router

Priced around \$ 90, TP-Link's Archer C7 AC1750 (V2) Wireless Dual Band Gigabit Router is an affordable router, but works the equivalent of an expensive router.

In throughput tests on the 2.4GHz and 5GHz bands, the Archer C7 is significantly faster than the competition, and it offers a great set of features, including 4 Gigabit LAN ports and a pair of USB 2.0 ports. Management settings are plentiful, but the web control panel is slow to respond and lacks user-friendly icons to help you navigate the menu system.

However, all of this hasn't stopped the Archer C7 from becoming one of today's top affordable routers.

Design and Features of TP-Link Archer C7

The Archer C7 is a dual-band AC1750 router using a 720MHz CPU. It can reach speeds of up to 450Mbps on the 2.4GHz band and 1300Mbps on the 5GHz band. The router has a glossy black casing, with dimensions of 24 x 16 x 3.3cm. The back of the router features 3 detachable and adjustable antennas, 4 Gigabit LAN ports, 1 Gigabit WAN port, and 2 USB 2.0 ports. Combined with them are the On / Off, Reset / WPS, Wi-Fi On / Off buttons and two LED status indicators. The front of the router has LEDs for power, radio band, all four LAN ports, WAN ports, and a button to control WPS activity.

The web console is the old, text-based version used on the original TP-Link Archer C7 and lacks the graphical elements you'll find on newer TP-Link routers, such as routers. Archer C2600 dual band wireless and Archer C3150 wireless Gigabit MU-MIMO router.

There's also a noticeable lag between how long you make a change and how long the change is saved (in some cases, waiting up to 30 seconds). However, you are provided with loads of basic and advanced settings. The main Status page has a list of settings on the left and statistical information about LAN, WAN, wireless connections, and central traffic. On the right is a detailed explanation for each setting. Network settings include WAN, LAN, MAC Clone, and IPTV options, each with basic wireless settings (SSID, Mode), as well as WPS settings, security (WPA / WPA2 Person and Enterprise) and MAC address filtering.



The Guest Network page allows you to create separate networks with limited guest access, as well as schedule access and control bandwidth for each network. In the Parental Controls section, you can create a browsing schedule and aggregate a list of allowed websites for specific clients.

There is also a separate access control option that allows you to create Internet access rules across the network. Other settings include Advanced Routing, Bandwidth Control, Port Forwarding and Port Triggering, VPN Pass-Through and Firewall settings and Dual-Band Selection, allowing you to turn it on and off on individual radio bands. In System Tools, you can change the timing settings, run network diagnostics, update the router's firmware, back up settings, and view the system log.

Archer C7 installation and performance

Installing the Archer C7 is easy. After connecting it to your computer and Internet, launch it and type tplinkwifi.net in the browser address bar to access the management console. Click the Quick Setup tab on the left and select Auto-Detect. The console will look for the Internet connection and ask if you want to run WiFi on dual band or just single band (2.4GHz or 5GHz). Select Concurrent and go to the wireless setup screen to configure the security settings. Once configured, the router is ready for use.



The Archer C7 performed well in throughput tests. This router's score is 91.3Mbps in the test on the 2.4GHz band at close range, which is significantly higher than other budget routers, including the Netgear AC1200 smart WiFi router (R6220) (74.1Mbps), D-Link AC1200 (DIR-842) (75Mbps) and the Linksys EA6350 AC1200 + (72.5Mbps) dual-band smart WiFi router.

Likewise, the Archer C7's 62.8Mbps score in the 9m speed test beat the competition too (Netgear R6220 was only 48.3Mbps, D-Link DIR-842 had a throughput of 41.5Mbps, and Linksys EA6350 has a speed of 39.3Mbps).

In the throughput test on the 5GHz band, the Archer C7's performance is excellent for a low-cost router. It achieved 509Mbps in the near-distance test, which is higher than the Netgear R6220 (331Mbps), D-Link

AC1200 (DIR-842) (332Mbps) and the Linksys EA6350 (427Mbps). At a distance of 9m, the Archer C7's 250Mbps score once again won, beating the Netgear R6220 (104Mbps), the D-Link DIR-842 (111Mbps) and the Linksys EA6350 (199Mbps).

To test the read and write speed of the router's file transfer, I use a USB and a 1.5GB folder containing a mixture of photo, music, video and document files.

As with other budget routers, the file transfer speed of the Archer C7 was average; Its write speed is 21.5MBps, the same as the Linksys EA6350 and slightly faster than the Netgear R6220 (17.6MBps). Linksys EA6100 AC1200 dual-band smart WiFi router (also a low-cost router) reaches 27.4 MBps.

On the read speed test, the Archer C7 has a throughput of 27.5MBps, which is again only slightly slower than the Linksys EA6350 (28MBps) and the Linksys EA6100 (28.3MBps), but slightly faster than the Netgear R6220. (25.6MBps). The D-Link DIR-842 was not included in these tests, as it does not have a USB port.

Conclude

The TP-Link Archer C7 AC1750 (V2) Wireless Dual Band Gigabit Router doesn't cost too much, but its performance and feature set are really impressive. Its 2.4GHz and 5GHz throughput scores are better than similarly priced budget models, including the Linksys EA6350 AC1200 + dual-band smart WiFi router, which offers a variety of management settings and I / O ports.

However, the Archer C7's user interface and file transfer performance need to be improved. In short, it's the fastest dual-band router in its class and a budget router option worth considering.

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