



GAMING MONITOR

\$1,099 | WWW.AOCMONITORAP.COM/AU

# AOC Agon AG271UG

AOC's latest premium gaming panel packs 4K into 27-inches.

**W**e live in an age when tablet computers with high-DPI IPS screens are handed out in boxes of Corn Flakes (other corn-based cereals are available). Well, almost. Similarly, you're nobody in the smartphone game without a decent high-DPI IPS panel at the very least. To be really competitive, you're talking OLED technology.

Yet the one device that could both most benefit from and make the best use of such displays lags miles off the pace, wheezing along as other devices dip over the horizon. Yes, we speak of the PC monitor. That's not to say that the market has been stagnant. Far from it, what with the arrival of adaptive sync, HDR and super-wide aspect ratios. Resolutions and panel sizes are up, too.

But true high-DPI? Not so much. At least, not at a price most of us can afford. So it's hardly surprising to find that AOC's latest premium panel, the Agon AG271UG,

clocks in at over a grand. It's a 27-inch model, with IPS tech and a healthy 4K pixel grid. That makes for a relatively high 168 pixels per inch for a PC monitor. By the standards of phones and tablets, which generally don't get out of bed for less than 250ppi, it's still pitiful. Likewise, it's hard to understand why this panel costs more than twice the price of a TN 4K monitor of the same size.

Remember also that AOC trades on value. A similar monitor from ASUS or Acer would be even more expensive. If it sounds like we're harshing on AOC, far from it. As this type of panel goes, the AG271UG has a lot going for it. It sports lovely, vibrant yet natural colours. It delivers well in our test images, too, rendering white and black scales with little visible compression. Super-smooth gradient rendering is on the menu, too. Pixel response is subjectively nice and zippy, to boot, especially for an IPS panel. Even better, all this is achieved

with none of that nasty inverse ghosting stuff that's a consequence of aggressive pixel overdrive settings.

Black levels and contrast are good, though not quite a match for the best VA panels. There's little evidence of IPS glow, either, which is welcome. It must also be said that, by the standards of PC monitors, the 3,840 x 2,160 pixel resolution makes for very sharp image quality and nice font rendering. What you don't get is that super-smoothness that comes with a DPI so high that individual pixels virtually disappear.

You also don't get a truly high-quality stand and enclosure. Superficially, it checks all the right boxes: There's full adjustability, including height, swivel, rotate and tilt, the bezel is thin and the stand is made of metal. But the design is dated, and the whole ensemble is awkward to assemble. At this high price, you'd expect a slick clip-in arrangement for attaching the stand to the chassis, not

a quartet of cheapo screws. The external, rather than integrated, power supply is also worth a demerit or two.

Of course, high-DPI tech implemented on the PC remains a mixed bag. Driving high resolutions in games is problematic, and the 4K res more or less dictates the AG271UG's 60Hz refresh.

When you can buy a 40-inch 4K TV, capable of 60Hz refresh, for half the price of this, the value proposition seems marginal. It's a nice screen, this AOC, but like pretty much all of its direct competition, it feels a little overpriced for what you're getting. ■ **Jeremy Laird**

## Verdict

Features ★★★★★  
Performance ★★★★★  
Value ★★★★★

Lovely 4K IPS panel, 27-inch proportions make for pin-sharp pixels, but it could be a little cheaper.

