

Review: Epson Powerlite Home Cinema 3700 is affordable upgrade to your home viewing experience

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There's nothing like the feeling when the lights go down and the movie starts.

Especially at a home theater.

The term can mean different things, but at its heart, a home theater is a setup to duplicate the movie theater experience at home.

There are many types of home theater but all of them have one thing in common - a video source to display movies and TV shows.

You can have a home theater with any type of TV, but my choice would be to use a projector.

Earlier this year, Dallas hosted a convention for home theater installers and dealers called CEDIA. I sat through a demo of several projectors at the Epson booth. After drooling at the image projected by the \$7,999 Pro Cinema LS10500, I asked if there were any new models that were more affordable.

I was shown Epson's Home Cinema models and sent the Powerlite Home Cinema 3700 (\$1,499) to review.

I'd like to say I took it home and set up a [home theater](#) in my living room, but honestly, my living room is way too small for a projector.

My time with the 3700 was spent at the office and in conference rooms.

SPECS

The 3700 is the mid-level projector of three models in the Home Cinema 3000 line. The main difference in the projectors is their contrast ratio and brightness (lumens).

The 3700 has 3,000 lumens of colored light and 3,000 lumens of white light and a 70,000-1 contrast ratio.

The picture is bright and clear with a 1080p (1920 x 1080) resolution and a 16:9 aspect ratio.

The brightness is good enough to view clearly in even a bright room, provided you're not too far away from the screen.

There are two 10-watt stereo speakers facing out the projector's backside.

The 3700 can show 2-D or 3-D content, and it has a pretty extensive lens shift, which means you don't have to place the projector directly in line with the screen. You can shift the image up to 60 percent vertically and 24 percent horizontally.

The 3700 can project a 110-inch image from just 10 { feet away from the screen.

The lens has a 1.6x zoom so you can fine-tune the image size to match your screen. You can also adjust the [aspect ratio](#) to 16:10 or 4:3.

There are two brightness modes (Eco and Normal). Eco is just fine for 2-D video. 3-D will look better in Normal mode.

The projector measures 16.1 x 12 x 6.4 inches and weighs 15.2 lbs.

The 3700 can project from the front of the screen or behind the screen (image flipped) if you have a translucent screen.

CONNECTIVITY

The 3700 has two HDMI ports - one has MHL, which stands for Mobile Hi-Definition Link. The MHL port can output video directly from your compatible phone or tablet, provided you have the correct adapter (not

included).

There's also a component video input (red, green, blue), composite video (red, white, yellow) and a 15-pin VGA cable to connect to a computer.

You can connect to your stereo through HDMI or an audio out port.

There's a USB port that can take a thumb drive full of JPG files and make a slideshow. The USB can also take an optional Wi-Fi adapter to let you connect to the projector wirelessly.

The 3700 comes with a very handy remote control, which works up to 32 feet from the projector.

I used the projector with my Macbook Pro via HDMI and VGA (with an adapter) and an Apple TV via HDMI.

Each time I changed video sources, the 3700 immediately switched to the proper input and video began almost immediately.

The only time I had to use buttons to select the source is when I had more than one source connected.

CONCLUSIONS

We use projectors in our office, and I frequently wish they were brighter and sharper. I didn't have to wish that about the 3700.

I didn't have any 3-D glasses to test with, but everything I've read online says you won't be disappointed with 3-D output.

The speakers are as good as or better than those in my TV, but connecting to better speakers is pretty easy.

The Home Cinema 3700 is a top-notch [projector](#) that I'd be happy to own (if I had room for it).

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Powerlite Home Cinema 3700

Pros: Bright, clear, easy to get up and running. Very adjustable picture.

Cons: A bit expensive. A bit loud in Normal mode.

Bottom line: Couldn't find much to complain about. Great picture and easy to use.

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